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# THE HINDU

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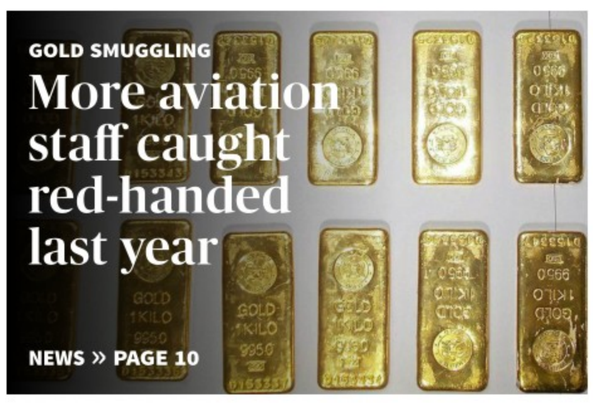
SAFEGUARDS FOR INVESTORS

**'Centre will clamp down on Ponzi apps'**

NEWS » PAGE 11



GOLD SMUGGLING

**More aviation staff caught red-handed last year**

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**India takes a pause in setting export target**

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MATTER OF POLICY

***India's huge population can be a boon***

*Prospects are great for demographic advantage*

EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**Sachin Tendulkar turns 50 today**

SPORT » PAGE 15

## Yediyurappa just gave way to change, says Nadda

**Nistula Hebbar**
NEW DELHI

Contrary to appearances, former Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa was "not removed" from the post but had given way to a generational change, BJP president J.P. Nadda says.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, he said Mr. Yediyurappa continued to play an important role in the party's campaign in the State.

"It is a change of responsibility, not just of a post. Here, Mr. Yediyurappa has been given a new responsibility of being a member of the Parliamentary Board, and of the election committee. His responsibility is to see that the party wins the polls. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and Yediyurappa*ji* are campaigning together," he said.

INTERVIEW ON
» PAGE 11

# Amritpal held in Punjab, shifted to jail in Assam

Punjab Police say operational inputs led them to the pro-Khalistan radical preacher in Rode village; however, an unverified video released on social media claims he had surrendered

**The Hindu Bureau**
CHANDIGARH

Pro-Khalistan radical preacher Amritpal Singh, facing detention under the National Security Act, was arrested by the Punjab Police from Moga district, even as reports claimed he had surrendered. Mr. Amritpal was taken to the Dibrugarh jail in Assam amid tight security.

**In custody:** Amritpal Singh, who had been absconding since March 18, after his arrest by the Punjab Police in Moga on Sunday. ANI

The arrest of Mr. Amritpal, who heads the Waris Punjab De (WPD) outfit, comes more than a month after the police launched a crackdown against him and his outfit. Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Headquarters, Sukhchain Singh Gill said Mr. Amritpal was arrested around 6.45 a.m. from Rode, the village of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a militant leader who was killed in 1984. The police had been on a manhunt since March 18, three weeks after Mr. Amritpal's supporters stormed the Ajnala police station in Amritsar, demanding the release of his aide Lovepreet Toofan.

"A special operation was launched by the Amritsar Police and the Intelligence Wing of Punjab Police to nab him. He was located in Rode village based on operational inputs received by the police. The village was then surrounded. He was inside a gurdwara, but police, however, didn't enter the gurdwara to maintain its sanctity... Amritpal knew he couldn't escape, he then came out and was arrested and sent to Dibrugarh under NSA," Mr. Gill said.

Responding to reports that Mr. Amritpal had surrendered, Mr. Gill said the radical preacher was "arrested based on operational inputs". "There was no escape route left for him. He was arrested," he said.

A video shared on social media showed the 30-year-old preacher saying he would "surrender" before the police at the gurdwara. However, its authenticity could not be ascertained. In the video, Mr. Amritpal claimed he had never feared arrest, and that in the past one month, excesses against Sikhs in the State had been exposed.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10
SOLITARY CONFINEMENT
» PAGE 10

## Two coaches of Mysuru-Thoothukudi Express separate after breakage of coupling

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Passengers travelling on the Mysuru-Thoothukudi Express (16236) spent anxious moments after the coaches "separated" allegedly due to breakage of coupling on Sunday. No passengers were injured.

The train, which was heading towards Bengaluru, reached the Ramanagara railway station around 8 p.m. It was then that the problem was noticed, officials said.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Sunday night, Railway sources said, "After the breakage of coupling, coach number 5 and 6 were separated. Following the incident, the passengers, who were travelling to Bengaluru, were accommodated in Hampi Express and Talaguppa Express. Those who booked tickets to Thoothukudi will be sent by the same train after necessary repair work."

The incident did not affect train movement on the Bengaluru- Mysuru section, the source said.

However, when contacted, Divisional Railway Manager of Bengaluru Division Shyam Singh said, "The train was coming from Mysuru towards Bengaluru. There were some technical issues with one of the coaches, and it was detached at Ramanagara. During the scheduled inspection, we found the problem in the coach, and engineers at the site took the necessary steps to rectify the problem. Our first priority was sending the passengers to the designated places. We are examining the problems that were identified in the coach."

## NEARBY

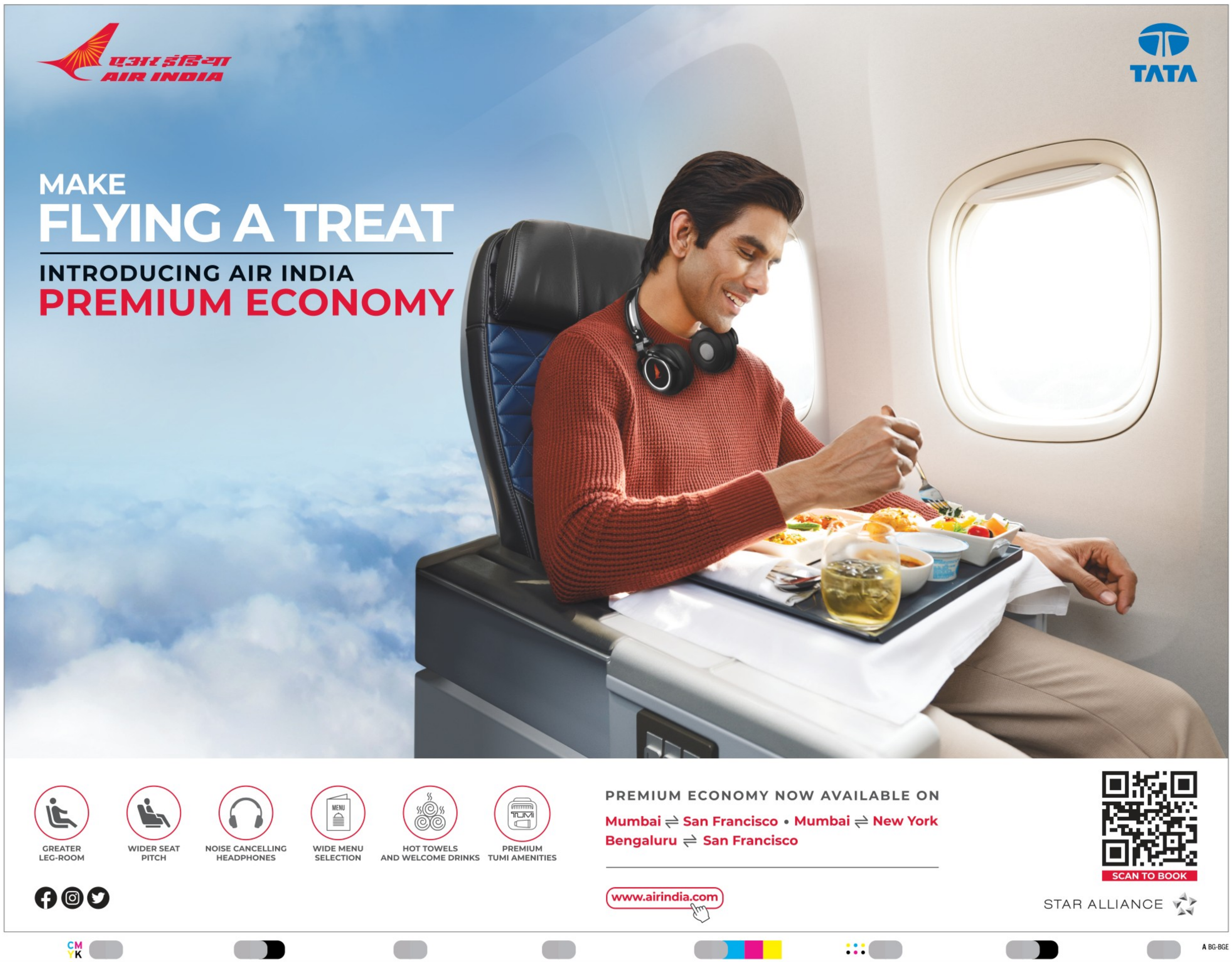
### 'BJP is against Basavanna's ideology'

HUBBALLI
Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said that BJP leaders, who claimed to be followers of Basaveshwara, were actually acting against his ideology.
» Page 6

### Siddaramaiah's remark has hurt Lingayats: BJP

BENGALURU
Congress leader Siddaramaiah's remark that the "Lingayat CM of the BJP [Basavaraj Bommai] has ruined the State through corruption" is an insult to the community, the ruling BJP has said. » PAGE 6

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGES 4 & 5



# Text&Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

### The estimated wheat procurement in Punjab in Rabi season

**120** In lakh metric tonne. This estimation is better than last year's 96.47 lakh MT. Rough weather resulted in extensive damages to wheat and other crops at many places in Punjab including Fazilka, Muktsar, Moga and Patiala districts. PTI

### The number of infrastructure projects hit by cost overruns

**354** These projects which entailed an investment of ₹150 crore or more have been hit by cost overruns of more than ₹4.55 lakh crore, according to a report. Out of 1,449 projects, as many as 821 projects were delayed. PTI

### The investments of foreign portfolio investors this month

**8,643** In ₹ crore. The foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) infused a net sum of ₹7,936 crore in March mainly driven by bulk investment in the Adani Group companies by the U.S.-based GQG Partners. PTI

### The number of Vande Bharat trains to be manufactured in Latur

**120** The trains will be manufactured at Marathwada Railway coach factory in Latur, according to Union Minister Raosaheb Danve. He added that the Centre has sanctioned ₹600 crore to set up the coach factory in Latur. PTI

### Public workers in Germany secure pay rise to offset inflation

**5.5** In %. The deal comes after several weeks of stalemate and repeated strikes among postal, transport and health workers demanding more money to cope with the rising cost of living. AFP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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# The EU's new crypto-legislation

What kind of crypto assets does MiCA seek to regulate? What are the regulatory requirements imposed on the crypto industry in the EU? How has the law been received? What are the aspects left out by the regulation? How does it compare to cryptocurrency regulation in India?

EXPLAINER

Diksha Munjal

**The story so far:**

The European Parliament, the legislative body of the 27-country block European Union, has approved the world's first set of comprehensive rules to bring largely unregulated cryptocurrency markets under the ambit of regulation by government authorities. The regulation, called the Markets in Crypto Assets (MiCA), will come into force after formal approval by member states.

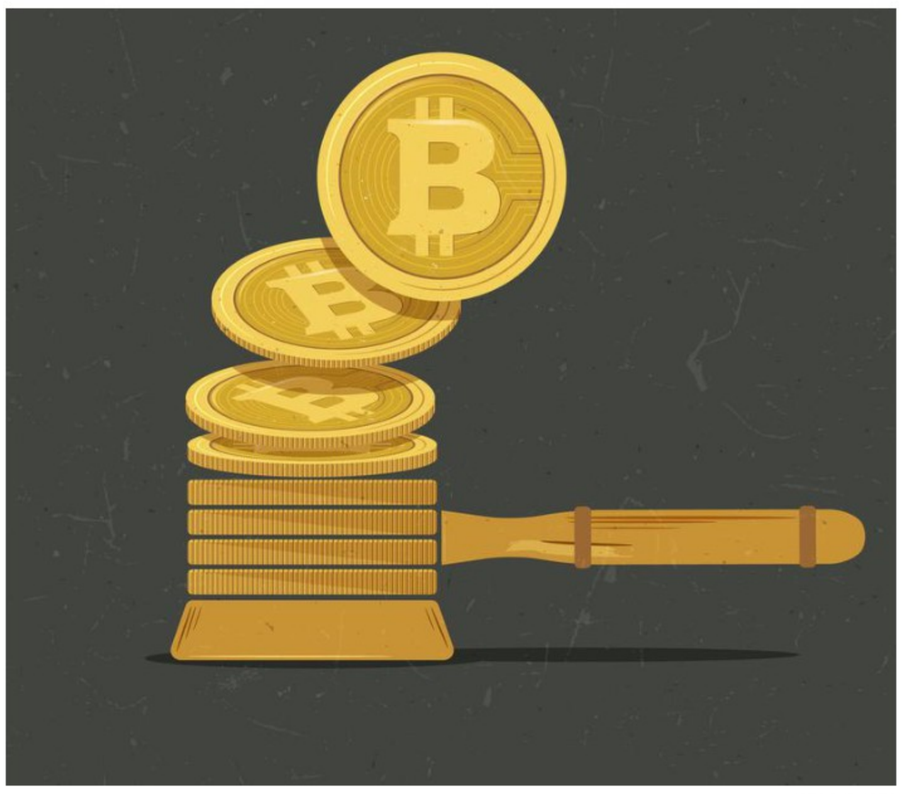
**Why regulation?**

Having a comprehensive framework like MiCA for 27 countries in Europe not only harmonises the crypto industry but also gives the EU a competitive edge in its growth compared to the U.S. or the U.K. which lack regulatory clarity. More importantly, 2022 saw some of the biggest failures and wipeouts in the crypto industry involving bankruptcies and fraud scandals, be it the collapse of the crypto exchange FTX and its spat with Binance or the failure of Terra LUNA cryptocurrency and its associated stablecoin. The liquidity shortage caused by these shocks led other crypto lending platforms to halt customer transfers and withdrawals before filing for bankruptcy.

**What kind of assets will MiCA cover?**

The MiCA legislation will apply to 'cryptoassets', which are broadly defined in the text as "a digital representation of a value or a right that uses cryptography for security and is in the form of a coin or a token or any other digital medium which may be transferred and stored electronically, using distributed ledger technology or similar technology". This definition implies that it will apply not only to traditional cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and Ethereum but also to newer ones like stablecoins.

As for the assets that will be out of MiCA's scope, it will not regulate digital assets that would qualify as transferable securities and function like shares or their equivalent and other cryptoassets that already qualify as financial instruments under existing regulation. It will also for the most part, exclude nonfungible tokens (NFTs). MiCA will also not regulate central bank digital currencies issued by the European Central Bank and digital assets issued by national central banks of EU member countries when acting in their capacity as monetary authorities, along with cryptoassets-related services offered by them.



ISTOCKPHOTO

**What are the new rules?**

MiCA will impose compliance on the issuers of cryptoassets, who are defined as the "legal person who offers to the public any type of cryptoassets". It will apply to cryptoasset service providers (CASPs) providing one or more of these services – the operation of a trading platform like CoinBase, custody and administration of crypto-assets on behalf of third parties (customers), the exchange of crypto-assets for funds/other crypto-assets, the execution of orders for crypto-assets, the placing of crypto-assets, providing transfer services for crypto -assets to third parties, providing advice on cryptoassets and crypto-portfolio management.

The regulation prescribes different sets of requirements for CASPs depending on the type of cryptoassets. The base regime will require every CASP to get incorporated as a legal entity in the EU. They can get authorised in any one member country and will be allowed to conduct their services across the 27 countries. They will then be supervised by regulators like the European Banking Authority and the European Securities and Markets Authority, who will ensure that the companies have the required risk management and corporate governance practices in place. Besides authorisation, service providers of stablecoins also have to furnish key information in the form of a white paper mentioning the details of the crypto product and the main participants in the company, the terms of the offer to the public, the type of blockchain verification mechanism they use, the rights attached to the cryptoassets in question, the key risks involved for the investors and a summary to help potential purchasers make an informed decision regarding their investment.

Another legislation passed with MiCA requires crypto companies to send information of senders and recipients of cryptoassets to their local anti-money laundering authority, to prevent laundering and terror financing activities.

**What has been the reaction?**

Leaders at some of the biggest cryptocurrency firms have taken exception to some aspects of MiCA but the broad view is that it is better to have a regulatory framework than having no rules at all and attracting regulatory action on a case-by-case basis without clarity.

Meanwhile, since it's been three years since MiCA has been in development, some experts feel that the regulation is already laggard in covering newer vulnerabilities in the crypto industry. For instance, it does not cover practices like crypto staking and lending, which led to some of the industry's biggest failures last year.

**How is crypto regulated in India?**

India is yet to have a comprehensive regulatory framework for cryptoassets. A draft legislation on the same is reportedly in the works.

A full-fledged regulation aside, the Indian government has taken certain steps to bring cryptocurrencies under the ambit of specific authorities and taxation. In the Union Budget for 2022, the Finance Ministry said that cryptocurrency trading in India has seen a "phenomenal increase" and imposed a 30% tax on income from the "transfer of any virtual digital asset." In March this year, the government placed all transactions involving virtual digital assets under the purview of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

### THE GIST

- The European Parliament has approved the world's first set of comprehensive rules to bring largely unregulated cryptocurrency markets under the ambit of regulation by government authorities.
- Leaders at some of the biggest cryptocurrency firms have taken exception to some aspects of the Markets in Crypto Assets (MiCA) legislation but the broad view is that it is better to have a regulatory framework than having no rules at all and attracting regulatory action on a case-by-case basis without clarity.
- India is yet to have a comprehensive regulatory framework for cryptoassets and a draft legislation on the same is reportedly in the works.

# How can a juvenile be tried as an adult in Court?

What are the recently issued guidelines by the National Commission for Protection of Children for trying a juvenile in case of heinous crimes? What is the role of the Juvenile Justice Board?

G.S. Bajpai
Anubhav Kumar

**The story so far:**

The National Commission for Protection of Children (NCPCR) has recently issued guidelines for conducting a preliminary assessment by the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) under Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015). This preliminary assessment is to ascertain whether a juvenile can be tried as an adult. Replacing the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, the 2015 Act, for the first time, provided for trying juveniles in the age group of 16-18 as adults in cases of heinous offences.

**How does a child get tried as adult?**

The Act has categorised the offences committed by children into three categories – petty offences, serious offences, and heinous offences. Section 15 of the JJ Act provides that in case of a heinous offence alleged to have been committed by a child, who has completed or is above the age of sixteen years, the Board shall conduct a preliminary assessment regarding his mental and physical capacity to commit such offence, ability to understand the consequences of the offence and the circumstances in which he allegedly committed the offence. Section 18 (3) of the Act further suggests that, if the Board, after preliminary assessment under section 15 passes an order that there is a need for trial of the said child as an adult, then the Board may order the transfer of the case to the Children's Court having jurisdiction to try such offences. Thus, the sole objective of having such a preliminary assessment is to determine whether a child within the age group of 16-18 years should be tried as an adult in case of heinous offences.

**What are the responsibilities of the Board?**

The guidelines further make it clear that the JJB shall be responsible for the preliminary assessment and provide the child, the child's family, and their counsel a copy of the order. It further states that in case the JJB does not have at least one member who is a practising professional with a degree in child psychology or child psychiatry, the Board shall take the assistance of psychologists or experts who have the experience of working with children in difficult times. The child should also be provided with a legal aid counsel through the District Legal Services Authority who shall be present during the preliminary assessment. One of the important aspects of the guidelines is that it mandates experts, who have the required qualification to assist the JJB, to undergo training concerning Section 15 of the JJ Act, 2015

During the preliminary assessment, the Board and experts shall also analyse and take into consideration the Social Investigation Report (SIR), to be prepared by the Probation officer or Child Welfare Officer or any social worker, or a Social Background Report (SBR) to be prepared after interaction with the child or child's family.

**What next?**

The NCPCR is under a statutory obligation under Section 109 of the JJ Act, 2015 to monitor the proper implementation of the provisions of the Act. The guidelines have been made to remove any ambiguity and to clarify the steps that need to be followed while conducting the preliminary assessment. However, the major issue remains the implementation and absorption of these principles in the system, particularly to be followed by the JJB and the Children's Court. A lot of principles which have been made a part of the Act have not been given due prominence by the Board as well as by the Children's Court.

*Bajpai is Vice-Chancellor, National Law University Delhi and Anubhav is Assistant Professor at RGNUL, Punjab*

### THE GIST

- The National Commission for Protection of Children has recently issued guidelines for conducting a preliminary assessment by the Juvenile Justice Board under Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.
- The sole objective of having such a preliminary assessment is to determine whether a child within the age group of 16-18 years should be tried as an adult in case of heinous offences.
- The NCPCR is under statutory obligation to monitor the proper implementation of the provisions of the Act.

# MLAs re-elected multiple times, but old problems persist in Rajajinagar and Mahalakshmi Layout

Civic infrastructure crumbling in the densely populated areas. Both constituencies suffer from traffic bottlenecks and need better infrastructure.

KEY CONSTITUENCIES

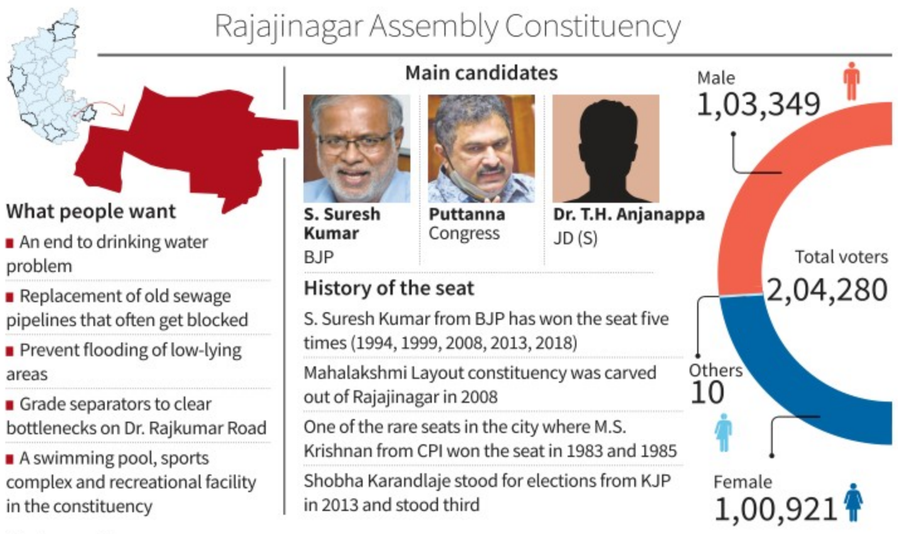
**K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj**
BENGALURU

Given that the present Rajajinagar and Mahalakshmi Layout Assembly constituencies were together as one constituency till 2008, the problems faced by the residents across the two segments are also similar: a shortage of drinking water, flooding of low-lying areas and clogged drainage pipes. Both constituencies suffer from traffic bottlenecks and need better infrastructure.

However, both constituencies have re-elected their MLAs multiple times – S. Suresh Kumar five times and K. Gopalaiah thrice. In Mahalakshmi Layout, even when the two-time JD (S) MLA Mr. Gopalaiah defected to the BJP under "Operation Kamala", he was re-elected in a bypoll in 2019 with the largest margin he has won by. MLAs have got re-elected, but problems persist.

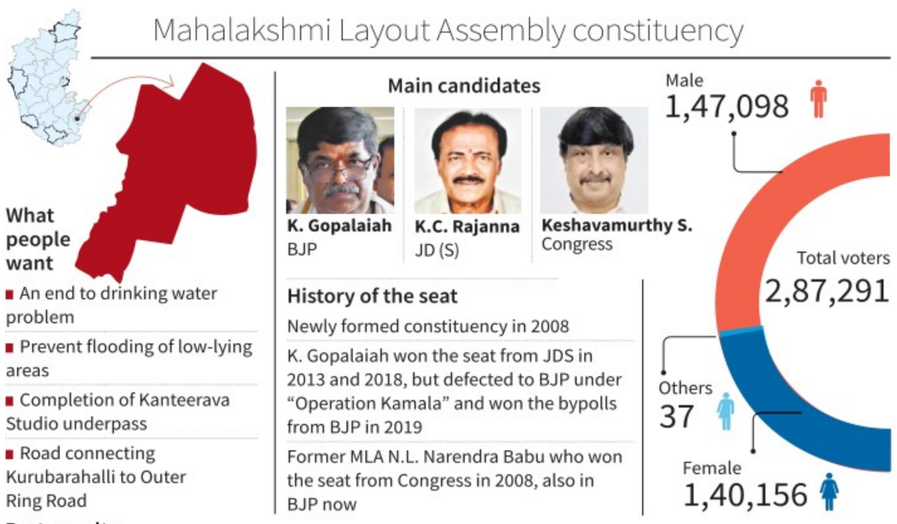
### Population density

Both constituencies have densely populated lower income demography dominated pockets; for instance, Marappanapalya, Bhuvaneshwariagar in Mahalakshmi Layout and Jedarahalli, Prakash Nagar in Rajajinagar have crumbling civic infrastructure. "These areas are so densely populated that in a single 30x40 site, they build two buildings of four storeys each that usually houses over 40 people," said former mayor and Congress leader G. Padmavathi.




Past results

| | Winner | Votes polled Vote share | Runner-up | Votes polled Vote share | Third place | Votes polled Vote share |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2018 | S. Suresh Kumar BJP | 56,271 46.86% | G. Padmavathi Congress | 46,818 38.99% | H.M. Krishnamurthy JD (S) | 9,168 11.36% |
| 2013 | S. Suresh Kumar BJP | 39,291 36.45% | R. Manjula Naidu Congress | 24,524 22.75% | Shobha Karandlaje KJP | 20,909 19.4% |




Past results

| | Winner | Votes polled Vote share | Runner-up | Votes polled Vote share | Third place | Votes polled Vote share |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019 Bypoll | K. Gopalaiah BJP | 85,851 58.65% | M. Shivaraju Congress | 31,493 21.51% | Dr. Girish Nashi JD(S) | 23,511 16.06% |
| 2018 | K. Gopalaiah JD(S) | 88,218 55.18% | N. L. Narendra Babu BJP | 47,118 29.47% | H. S. Manjunath Congress | 20,496 12.82% |
| 2013 | K. Gopalaiah JD(S) | 66,127 44.73% | N. L. Narendra Babu Congress | 50,757 34.33% | S. Harish BJP | 23,545 15.93 |

This has strained the civic infrastructure in these areas. Most of these areas have old sewage pipelines which have a very low diameter, and because of the added load in recent years, they often clog.

"Every time a drainage pipe clogs, it leads to a lot of smell and has several implications for health. BWSSB doesn't have the personnel. They provide the vehicle, and we need to employ private people to unclog these sewage pipes spending anywhere in the range of ₹1,500 - ₹2,000. We need these pipes to be replaced," said Kamalakar, a resident of Gautamnagar, Rajajinagar.

Several pockets of Mahalakshmi Layout also report the same problem. These densely populated pockets also suffer from drinking water shortage and are forced to also rely on borewells and tankers. However, the groundwater levels have depleted, and borewells are finding water only close to a 1,000 feet.

These pockets are also some of the low-lying areas with extensive encroachments on storm-water drains and end up being flooded during rains. Several parts of Mahalakshmi Layout flooded in 2022. It was so severe that a four-storey building had to be brought down after its foundation flooded with rainwater started collapsing.

"Every time there is heavy rain, most of our houses are flooded, mostly with dirty water from the drains. The problem hasn't been fixed for over a decade now," said Shubha, a resident of Vrishabhavathi ward, Mahalakshmi Layout.

### Traffic bottlenecks

Meanwhile, both constituencies suffer from traffic bottlenecks. The Kanteerava Studio underpass in Mahalakshmi Layout is half done and stuck for over five years now due to land acquisition issues, even as a road connecting Kurubarahalli to Outer Ring Road has failed to take off.

In Rajajinagar, while West of Chord Road has been made a signal-free corridor recently, incumbent MLA Mr. Suresh Kumar said he plans to build multiple grade separators to ease bottlenecks on Dr. Rajkumar Road.

He also said there was a demand for a swimming pool in Rajajinagar, which he said he will develop this year despite paucity of space.

### Anti-incumbency

Though Mr. Suresh Kumar, who lost his ministership in 2021, has taken up an extensive outreach campaign where he has himself visited over 17,000 households in Rajajinagar in the last eight months, there seems to be a latent anti-incumbency against him, given he has been MLA for five terms now.

This was evident in how there were aspirants for the Rajajinagar ticket, even within BJP, arguing that Mr. Suresh Kumar faced anti-incumbency and must be retired like other seniors, and youngsters should be given a chance. However, he managed to get a ticket.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gopalaiah has received some flak for being "not reachable" to voters after he became a Minister and was given in charge of high-profile districts like Mandya and Hassan. Opposition parties argue given the anti-incumbency in both constituencies, there was a fair chance for change this time.

# ISRO completes post-mission disposal operation of GSAT-12

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently completed the post-mission disposal (PMD) operation of the communication satellite GSAT-12. The satellite carrying 12 extended C band transponders was launched in 2011 and served for more than a decade. However, after the launch of its replacement satellite CMS-01 in 2020, the GSAT-12 was relocated to 47.96°E longitude from 83° E longitude where it was located till March 2021.

The PDM was successfully completed on March 23.ISRO said that the Geosynchronous Earth Orbital (GEO) regime is one of the most populated and highly utilised regions and that the internationally accepted space debris mitigation guidelines by the UN and IADC recommend disposing of an object away from the GEO region at its end-of-life. "The recommended practice is to re-orbit the object to a nearly circular graveyard orbit sufficiently above the GEO region so that the orbit would not decay back into the GEO-protected zone under the influence of perturbation forces, such as non-uniformity of Earth shape, Sun's Moon's gravity, solar radiation pressure, etc., within another 100 years," ISRO said. For GSAT-12, the required minimum raise in perigee altitude was estimated to be 261 km.

As a result of meticulous operations management by the Master Control Facility (MCF) in Hassan, the available fuel of GSAT-12 was more than sufficient to meet this goal, ISRO said.

# Cyclist dies after being hit by an SUV on KIA road

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

A cyclist was killed after he was hit by a speeding SUV near Kodigehalli on Kempegowda International Airport road on Sunday morning, drawing the ire of cyclists in the city. The deceased has been identified as Nagaraj, 47, a resident of Begur, Yelahanka, who ran a private business.

Nagaraj had been to Hebbal and was on the way back to attend a housewarming ceremony in Yelahanka when the SUV rammed into his cycle from behind around 7 a.m. The cyclist was not wearing a helmet and suffered severe head injuries. Though he was immediately rushed to a nearby private hospital, he was declared "brought dead" at the hospital. Hebbal Traffic Police have registered a case against the SUV driver for causing death due to rash and negligent driving and arrested him.

Between 2019-2021, 28 cyclists were killed in road accidents on the city streets, and as many as 110 cyclists were injured. Bicycle mayor of the city Sathya Sankaran said the government was to blame for accidents involving cyclists.

"For instance, there is a highway below the expressway, where a cycle lane could have been easily provided. But since that is not provided, the cyclist, in this case, has gone on the flyover. There is a need to segregate fast-moving and slow-moving traffic, especially non-motorised traffic," Mr. Sankaran said.

**Text & Context**

A weekday feature on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and a quiz. In the latest issue (April 24, Monday), the following explainer is available:

- Explained | What is the EU's new crypto-legislation?
**bit.ly/cryptocurrencyeu**

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**Timings**
**BENGALURU**

| | |
|---|---|
| **MONDAY, APR. 24** | |
| RISE | 06:03 SET 18:33 |
| RISE | 09:10 SET 22:32 |
| **TUESDAY, APR. 25** | |
| RISE | 06:02 SET 18:33 |
| RISE | 10:02 SET 23:26 |
| **WEDNESDAY, APR. 26** | |
| RISE | 06:02 SET 18:34 |
| RISE | 10:56 SET 00:00 |

| **Bengaluru Weather** | max | min |
|---|---|---|
| Tumakuru | 34 | 26 |
| Mysuru | 35 | 23 |
| Bengaluru | 35 | 23 |

**Bengaluru Today**
**35°C** The weather will be warm and humid. Night also will be pleasant. Chances of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds.

**Bengaluru Tomorrow**
**33°C** Morning will be pleasant with mist & haze. Spell of moderate rain & thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

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THE HINDU
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# Metro services disrupted

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

A delay in the completion of maintenance work disrupted metro services on the Green Line (Nagasandra to Silk Institute) for some time on Sunday.

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) was carrying out maintenance work between R.V. Road and Banashankari. "The maintenance work was delayed by 10 minutes, due to which train services were partially disrupted for 25 minutes. Normal train services have been restored," said a BMRCL official.

## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

### DEATH

**S V** Balasubramaniam (90), Retired Special Correspondent, The Hindu, Madurai passed away on 23- 04- 2023. Address: Old No: 39/1, New No: 97, Bazullah Road, T.Nagar, Chennai-600017. Contact No: 044 - 28142664.

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GNANANKIT CLAT 2023 AIR 1
BANGALORE : JAYANAGAR VIJAYANAGAR MALLESHWARAM
9742376459
9731212124

ASTROLOGY
RUDRAKSH REMEDY (since1518): Kundli, Job, Vastu, Luv, Grah. 40 yrs exp Global Astro- 9896304000

EDUCATIONAL
GENERAL
ONLINE WESTERN Violin & Guitar Lessons: Call / WhatsApp :- 7330959096

PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
I JOSEPH BENNY P V, R/at No. 102, 2nd Main, Maruti Nagar, Yelahanka, Bangalore 64, have changed my sons name from RYAN JOSEPH P to RYAN JOSEPH for all his future purposes by affidavit dated 21–04–2023, sworn before notary B.Seshagiri, Bangalore 43

## BUSINESS CONNECT

A Business Initiative

### From being the jeweller to the Royal Families The 150 YearC.Krishniah Chetty Group Of Jewellers presents exceptional craftsmanship and designs for Akshaya Trithiya

C. Krishniah Chetty Group Of Jewellers presents new range of Akshaya Trithiya collection that brings forth spirited, eclectic designs for the modern woman, perfect addition to your treasure trove of jewels. Over time, Indian jewellery has transpired to become more contemporary to suit a modern-day look. And while we love these, there's no denying that every festive season calls for the traditional best. And that means striking chokers, jhumkas, bangles and more, set with colourful stones, and intricate detail work, adding a heavier look that matches the season. Beautiful and built to last, our jewellery has long been used to celebrate every occasion across cultures in India. Exclusive jewellery sale is on with Exceptional jewellery display with a distinctive range of collections of traditional and contemporary creations. The iconic Akshaya Trithiya exclusive sale has fabulous, automated discounts for all., Additional loyalty members discounts, higher rate protection plan benefits, special prices on fine jewellery and volume discounts. View full collection Akshaya Trithiya collection on https://www.ckcjewellers.com/AT

### Pavithra Halkatti President of Dr. P.G. Halkatti Foundation announces an Annual National Award for eminent contributors in the field of Literature, Academics & Philanthropy

To commemorate Vachana Pitamaha DR P. G. Halkatti on the approaching occasion of his birth anniversary on July 02, 2023; P. G. Halkatti Foundation announced an Annual National Level Awards for distinguished contributors in the fields of Literature, Academics and Philanthropy. Born in the year 1880, Vachana Pitamaha DR P. G. Halkatti was a lawyer, politician, and a towering literary figure and social reformer who dedicated his life for spreading the ideals of Shiva Sharanas. He started institutions involved in the cause of education such as 'Veerashaiva Shikshana Fund', 'Veerashaiva Vidyavardhaka Sangha', 'Siddeshvara Middle School' & so on. He established the first co-operative bank the 'Siddeshvara Bank'; he gave up his legal practice and dedicated his entire life for the cause of Vachana literature. He established BLDEA (Bijapur Lingayat Education Association) on October 23, 1910. He continuously published the magazine, 'Shivaubhava' for a period of 35 years, which was a great service to the society at large. Apart from these major contributions, he was also a renowned politician holding the position of MLA in the state of Bombay. The Annual Awards announcement was made by the Trustees of the foundation Smt. Sheela Hara Halkatti, Grand Daughter-in-law of Dr. P.G. Halkatti earlier at a function held at Smt. Pavithra Halkatti's residence, Pavithra Halkatti is a Businesswoman, Lawyer, Social Entrepreneur & Philanthropist and Great Granddaughter of Dr. P.G. Halkatti, She is also the maternal granddaughter of Shri. M. Rajsekara Murthy, a senior politician in the Karnataka and central government and a renowned social reformer. The announcement was made in the auspicious presence of His Holiness Jagadguru Sri. Shivratri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji, Honourable Justice Shivraj Patil and Nadoja Dr. Manu Baligar on April 13, 2023. The awards for the three category awardees will include a Trophy, Citation & INR 1 Lakh, the awardees will be selected by Nadoja. Dr. Manu Baligar along with the members of the P.G. Halkatti Foundation.

### KIOCL Celebrates 48th Year Foundation Day at Corporate office

Swaminathan Chairman cum Managing Director stated in his address that the journey close to five decades had turmoil since beginning but with sheer belief with undaunted support of all the employees, we could overcome in all the endeavors. During FY 2021-2, Company's performance was excellent but due to imposition of export duty of 45% on Iron Oxide Pellet w.e.f. 22.05.2022 by Govt. of India, had a major blow to the production of Iron Oxide Pellets. The company has resumed pellet production in full swing subsequent to removal of export duty on Nov 2022. We are installing non- recovery coke oven plant at Blast Furnace Unit (BFU) under 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' with indigenous technology supplier. Captive coke production will aid the Company for input cost control of BF operations. The new vertical of Mineral Exploration (ME) is performing as per the targets set by the National Mineral Exploration Trust hopes to execute more ME Projects across the country. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) has been introduced w.e.f 1st April 2023 in our company to automate and manage core business process for optimal performance. Hope every one of us will collectively work towards the upcoming projects & in achieving the organizational objectives. As Helen Keller had once said "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence", let's embrace new opportunities, as now is the time to innovate and contribute our power in the Corporate world. Marching forward to reach the altitude, it's time to celebrate & rejoice to bring back the lost glory of Kudremukh.

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CACHE

ISTOCKPHOTO

# What is LockBit ransomware and how is it specifically targeting Apple computers?

The ransomware works as a self-spreading malware, not requiring additional instructions once it has successfully infiltrated a single device with access to an organisational intranet. It was reportedly responsible for an attack on the U.K. postal services earlier this year

Nabeel Ahmed

On April 16, in a first, reports emerged that LockBit ransomware was found to be targeting Mac devices. Cybercriminals have developed new ransomware encryptors designed to target macOS devices, making this the first major ransomware operation to specifically target Apple computers. The new encryptors target both older Macs and newer ones running on Apple Silicon. The same gang was also reportedly behind a cyber-attack on U.K. postal services earlier this year, causing international shipping to grind to a halt.

**What is LockBit ransomware?**
First reported in September 2019 and dubbed the "abcd" virus, due to the file extension used when encrypting victim's files, the LockBit ransomware is designed to infiltrate victims' systems and encrypt important files. The virus is categorised as a "crypto virus" due to its requests for payment in cryptocurrency to decrypt files on the victim's device. The ransomware is therefore typically deployed against victims who feel hindered enough by the disruption to pay heavy sums in exchange for access to the files and can afford to do so.

The gang behind the LockBit ransomware reportedly maintains a dark web portal to recruit members and release data of victims who refuse to meet their demands, as part of their business model. In the past, LockBit ransomware has been used to target enterprises and organisations in the U.S., China, India, Ukraine, and Indonesia. Attacks have also been recorded throughout Europe, including France, Germany, and the U.K.

**Why is LockBit targeting macOS?**
Historically, ransomware has targeted Windows, Linux, and VMware ESXi servers. However, LockBit is now working to create encryptors targeting Macs for the first time, a report from BleepingComputer said. Analysis of the encryptors revealed they were put together as a test, rather than an actual ready-to-use ransomware. Experts believe that, after launching multiple attacks across Europe and Asia, the gang is developing tools to target macOS and further increase the scope of attacks to bring in more financial gains for the operation.

**How does LockBit ransomware work?**
It works as a self-spreading malware, not requiring additional instructions once it has successfully infiltrated a single device with access to an organisational intranet. It is also known to hide executable encryption files by disguising them in the .png format, thereby avoiding detection by system defences. Attackers use phishing tactics and other social engineering methods to impersonate trusted personnel or authorities to lure victims into sharing credentials. Sometimes, the ransomware has also used brute force to gain access to the intranet server and network of an organisation.

Once it has gained access, the ransomware prepares the system to release its encryption payload across as many devices as possible. It then disables security programs and other infrastructures that could permit system data recovery. The goal is to ensure that data recovery without assistance from the LockBit gang is impossible.

After this is ensured, the ransomware places an encryption lock on all system files, which can only be unlocked via a custom key created by the LockBit gang. The process leaves behind a ransom note, with instructions to restore the system, and has reportedly also included threatening blackmail messages. Victims are then left with no choice but to contact the LockBit gang and pay up for the data, which the gang may sell on the dark web – whether the ransom is paid or not.

**Who is behind the ransomware?**
The group behind this is known as the LockBit gang. It is considered the most prolific ransomware group ever.

It operates on the ransomware-as-a-service (Raas) model and comes from a line of extortion cyberattacks. In this model, willing parties put down a deposit for use in a custom attack and make profits through the ransom payment. The ransom is divided between the LockBit developer team and attacking affiliates, who receive up to three-fourths of the ransom, cybersecurity company Kaspersky revealed in a blog post.

Though the exact location of the gang is yet to be ascertained, their attack patterns and propensity to avoid attacking Russian systems or countries within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) suggest the group operates within its territories, and that it avoids these countries to escape prosecution.

**What actions have authorities taken?**
Due to its ransomware-as-a-service model, the LockBit gang has been on the authorities' radar for some time now. In November 2022, a dual Russian and Canadian national with suspected links to the gang was arrested, in Ontario, Canada for his alleged involvement in attacks targeting critical infrastructure and large organisations. The arrest came after similar action was taken in Ukraine, in October 2021, a report from TechCrunch said. A press release from the U.S Department of Justice notes that LockBit has claimed at least 1,000 victims in the U.S., extracting millions of dollars in the process.

**How do we protect systems against the LockBit ransomware?**
While there are no fool-proof ways of protecting against ransomware attacks, organisations and individuals can take certain steps to increase resilience against such cyber threats. The use of strong passwords, with strong variations of special characters which are not easy to guess along with multi-factor authentication should be implemented. This ensures the use of brute force will not be enough to compromise systems. Organisations can also undertake training exercises to educate employees on the use of phishing attacks and their identification. Old and unused user accounts should be deactivated and closed as they can become weak links in the security apparatus. Additionally, organisations and individuals should have an understanding of cybersecurity threats and vulnerable points that may be exploited by cybercriminals.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

## One of India's greatest sportspersons turns 50 today. Here is a quiz on Sachin Tendulkar, his career and his exploits

Srinivasan Ramani

**QUESTION 1**
One of Tendulkar's enduring records remains the fact that he has scored 100 international centuries — 51 in Tests and 49 in ODIs. Which cricketer (with 75 hundreds) stands second?

**QUESTION 2**
In the 200 Tests that Tendulkar played for India, which bowler dismissed him the most times (nine)? Which team does he play for?

**QUESTION 3**
Among the 58 grounds which hosted Tendulkar in completed Tests, on which ground did Tendulkar score his most Test runs (971 out of 15,921 overall)?

**QUESTION 4**
Between January and April 2004, Tendulkar scored 497 runs across two Test matches (in Sydney against Australia and in Multan against Pakistan) to create a record for the most runs scored between dismissals. This record was broken by an Australian batsman who scored a whopping 614 runs between December 2015 and February 2016. Name him.

**QUESTION 5**
Which batsman did Tendulkar dismiss the most across Tests (once) and ODIs (7 times)? And which team did he play for?

**Visual question:**
Name this bowler who holds the distinction of getting Tendulkar out in a mode of dismissal just once in his Test career. Name the dismissal type. GETTY IMAGES

**Questions and Answers to the April 21 edition of the daily quiz:** 1. Prince wrote and produced the album for this superhero movie. **Ans: *Batman* by Tim Burton**
2. Prince performed this Queen song at the Super Bowl in this year. **Ans: 'We will rock you'; 2007**
3. Prince won the Golden Globe award for Best Song in a Motion Picture for his song 'When Doves Cry'. Is the statement true or false? **Ans: False. He won it for 'Song of The Heart' from *Happy Feet*.**
4. The name of the character Prince played in the movie *Purple Rain.* **Ans: The Kid**
5. The singer was a fan of this show, and its storyline was altered for Prince's cameo. **Ans: *New Girl***
6. This custom purple colour was named after Prince. **Ans: Love Symbol #2**
**Early Birds:** Jahnavi Taak| K. N. Viswanathan

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

## *He must be on the wrong side of forty*

The job has taken a toll on him. After all, he's been in the saddle for more than 20 years

S. Upendran

"Wow! You're sweating like crazy! Coming from the club?"

"That's right! Played a couple of sets of tennis with Mr. Dinakar, and boy did he make me run."

"It's amazing how well he plays considering he's on the wrong side of 60."

"Wrong side of 60? What are you talking about?"

"The informal expression 'wrong side of' is usually used with someone's age. If you say that someone is on the wrong side of 60, you mean that the person is older than sixty. At least, the individual looks older."

"How much older?"

"You're are not really sure about it. You don't know the person's exact age."

"The only thing you know is that the person is older than 60."

"Exactly! Here's another example. *My uncle has slowed down considerably. Understandable I guess, considering that he's on the wrong side of 70*."

"You talked about the wrong side of 60, does the expression 'right side of 60' exist?"

"It certainly does! When you say that someone is on the right side of 60, what you're suggesting is that the person is not 60 yet."

"In other words, he's less than 60. But you don't know how much younger."

"Exactly! If you want to improve your game, you should play tennis with Janani. Like you, she's on the right side of thirty."

"That's true! Anyway, after the game, Mr. Dinakar and I had a brief chat about work. He seems to be a very knowledgeable person."

That he is! He is the CEO of some well-known pharmaceutical company. He's been in the saddle for well over ten years."

"Been in the saddle? What are you talking about?"

"That's right! The expression 'in the saddle' means 'to be in charge'. Any person who is in the saddle is the decision maker."

"I see. In other words, he's in total control of the organisation."

"I guess you could say that."

"The Chief Minister has had several setbacks. I don't think he'll be in the saddle for long."

"Well, he believes there's nothing to worry about – that he's firmly in the saddle."

"For the first time, the company my father works for has a woman in the saddle."

"That's good! By the way, did you buy a new saddle for your motorcycle?"

"Why would I put a saddle on my motorcycle? Don't you..."

"The seat of a motorcycle can be called 'saddle'. Joshi is looking for a saddle that is well cushioned."

"The saddle on my father's old cycle needs to be replaced."

"Good luck with that!"

*upendrankye@gmail.com*

## Word of the day

**Gourmet:**
a person devoted to refined sensuous enjoyment (especially good food and drink)

Synonyms: gastronome, bon vivant, foodie, epicure, epicurean

Usage: *My co-worker is a celebrated gourmet.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/gourmetpronun

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈgʊəmeɪ/, /ˈgɔːmeɪ/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

# From 2024, Class 1 admission in State only for children who have completed six years

Notably, most Central board schools and Kendriya Vidyalayas have already implemented the rule

**Jayanth R.**
BENGALURU

Despite a Karnataka Government order offering relaxation for two years, the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL) has decided to implement the rule of mandatory completion of six years by June 1 for admission to class 1 from the academic year 2024-25.

Most Central board schools and Kendriya Vidyalaya Schools (KVS) have implemented the rule from the 2023-24 academic year.

The Karnataka government is following the age criteria of 5+ year for admissions for class 1. However, as part of the National Education Policy (NEP-2020), the Union Education Ministry's Department of School Education and Literacy has made it mandatory for completion of six years for admission to class 1.

A file photo of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Malleswaram, in Bengaluru.

On July 26, 2022, the DSEL had issued an order mandating the same from the academic year 2023-24. It created a lot of confusion and anxiety among parents, after which the Karnataka government gave a relaxation for two academic years. An order issued by the DSEL on November 15, 2022, stated that the 6-year age completion rule will be implemented from 2025-26 academic year. Now, DSEL has decided to implement the order one year earlier. Vishal R., Commissioner, Department of Public Instruction, told *The Hindu*, "The Minister and the Secretary of the department have already decided to the implement this order with effect from the academic year of 2024-25. Those children who have already joined LKG in 2022-23 are eligible to enter class I in the academic year of 2024-25, but not nursery students."

**In February 2023, the Union Education Ministry had once again reiterated and directed all States and UTs to make 6 years minimum age for Class I admission**

In February 2023, the Union Union Education Ministry had once again reiterated and directed all States and Union Territories to make 6 years minimum age for class 1 admission. However, KVs, which come under the Union Government, and most of the Central board schools like CBSE and ICSE, set aside the State government order of the two-year relaxation and made it mandatory from the academic year 2023-24.

Suprith, secretary of Oxford Institution, Bengaluru said, "The Union Education Ministry and CBSE have sent the order and made minimum age 6 years mandatory for admission to class 1 from the academic year of 2023-24. Therefore, we are following this order and providing admission to students of 6+ years for class 1 this year."

Aravind, a parent, said, "My son is 5 years 10 months old. Last year, he was in UKG. This year, I am trying to admit him to class I in a CBSE school. But, they refused to admit him because of the age criteria. There is a lot of confusion in the State and Central government orders. The State Government had given two years relaxation. Central board schools are not following this. Wasting one academic year is a great loss for the future of the children."

Dr. Vishal said, "The State Government had given two years' relaxation from the age cap. We can't do anything if the Central board schools are following the Union Government instructions."

## READER'S MAIL

**Barricades on footpaths**

Sir, – Four months after footpaths and streets on Bull Temple Road and surrounding areas were dug up, tiles have finally been laid on pavements, and tarring of roads is in progress. Along with this, the BBMP should put up barricades on footpaths, like in M.G. Road, so that motorists won't park vehicles and eateries won't put up chairs. On the roads, there should be clear demarcation for parking space.

**G. Padmanabhan,**
*Bengaluru*

**Readers can write to letters.bangalore @thehindu.co.in**

# Zero Shadow Day in city tomorrow

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

It's Zero Shadow Day in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

At 12.17 p.m., the Sun will be directly overhead and hence any vertical object will cast no shadow.

"This happens for places between the Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn and is on April 25 and August 18 for Bengaluru," said the Indian Institute of Astrophysics.

"To celebrate this, we will organise a public talk followed by hands-on activities to demonstrate Zero Shadow Day on our campus.

"The latter will involve observing the effect of the changing shadow length of objects as well as measuring the length of the shadow."

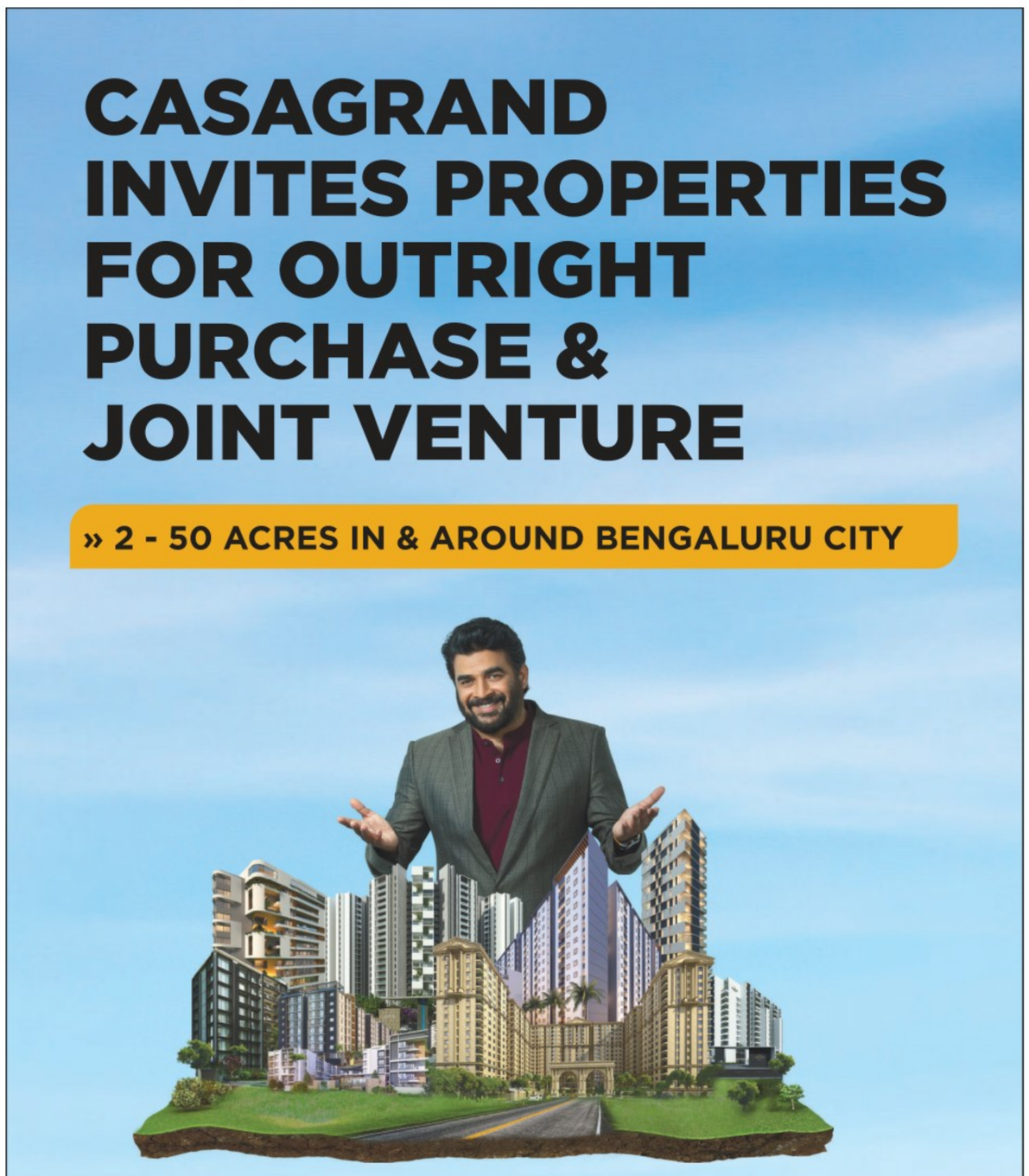
"The moment of zero shadow, when the Sun is directly overhead in Bengaluru, is at 12:17 afternoon," it further added.

CENTRE FOR BRAIN RESEARCH (CBR)
An Autonomous Centre of the
Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore – 560 012.
Admission for Ph.D. Program-2023
Centre for Brain Research (CBR) invites applications from eligible and highly motivated candidates for admission to its full-time Ph.D. Program beginning on 01st August 2023. CBR promotes interdisciplinary research in basic and clinical neuroscience to understand brain aging and aging-related brain disorders.
CBR is a recognized research centre for Ph.D. program by Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Karnataka. The degree will be awarded by MAHE.
Last date for online submission of application is 15th May 2023.
For areas of research at CBR, admission process and other information, please visit www.cbr.iisc.ac.in
Sd/- Manager(Admin)

DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICER,
BENGALURU DISTRICT
& CHIEF COMMISSIONER, BBMP
N.R. Square, Bengaluru – 560 002.
GENERAL ELECTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY - 2023
Subject: Submission of explanation to Notice issued asking for reasons for non-attendance to training by officers / personnel assigned for election duties on 20.04.2023 – reg.
and
Warning that strict action will be taken against additional personnel who do not attend the training.
Polling Personnel Deployment:

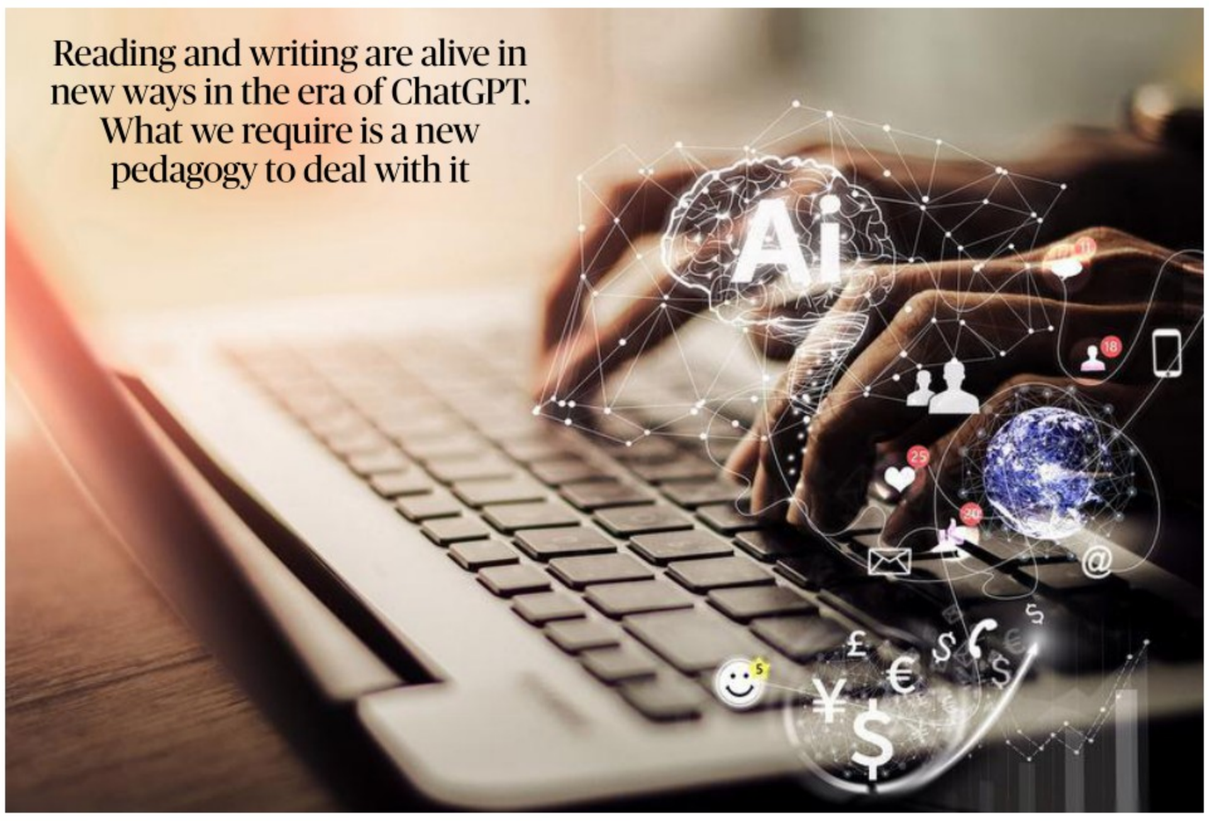
| | |
|---|---|
| Date of 1st level Election Training (for absentees and additional personnel) | 25th April 2023 at 9:30 AM |
| Date of 2nd level Election Training | Will be intimated later |
| Date of Mustering | 9th May 2023 at 9:30 AM |
| Date of Poll | 10th May 2023 |

CAUTION
Notice has been issued as per RP Act 1951 asking for reasons to those who have not attended the training held on 20.04.2023. Explanation to be given in person at your assigned training centres.
Personnel assigned for election duties should compulsorily attend on the date and time at the centres for training, mustering and poll duty.
Further, failure by any personnel to attend, immediate FIR will be booked u/s 134 of RP Act 1951 against the defaulting official and appropriate legal action will be taken and disciplinary action will be initiated under relevant service rules and penal code.
A Nodal Officer has been appointed from each office for the purpose of polling personnel deployment. The Nodal Officer shall serve the election duty orders on their staff and issue Notice asking for reasons for non-attendance and take responsibility to ensure their attendance at the training and poll duty. Any negligence in performing the above said duties will attract cognizable penal action u/s 134 of RP Act 1951 against the Nodal Officer.
Polling personnel can download Presiding Officer Handbook from
https://eci.gov.in
*District Election Officer, Bengaluru District &*
*Chief Commissioner, BBMP, Bengaluru*



# A blueprint for pedAIgogy

Salil Sahadevan




GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

It is a relationship of love, hate and fear. Everyone is currently in a debate over the implications of ChatGPT. On one side, Bill Gates calls ChatGPT the most revolutionary technology in the last 40 years. Teachers marvel at the capacity of the AI chatbot to develop essays, craft poetry, write like Hemingway, create computer code, provide translations, do research assistance, simulate dialogues, and make art, to name a few. On the other side, many educators fret over the possibility of academic cheating. Italy briefly banned ChatGPT over privacy concerns. Notable Artificial Intelligence specialists and tech entrepreneurs including Elon Musk urged all AI labs to immediately pause training of AI systems more capable than GPT-4 for at least six months!

Meanwhile, last month, many ed-tech companies in India started courses on ChatGPT that targeted job seekers and professionals. An online course on ChatGPT for beginners from an individual teacher garnered revenue of ₹28 lakhs and drew thousands of subscribers in three months. There is nothing surprising in the demand for learning Chat GPT in non-tech ways. But, as generative AI has far-reaching implications on our daily life in multiple ways, why not create an all-age curriculum for AI starting with Chat GPT?

**What it can do**

While Chat GPT can enable learning in many areas, such as generating ideas, it may be tricky in other areas like teaching the basics of grammar. It can hinder or help based on how we use it. So, let us understand what ChatGPT can and cannot do. There is a clear difference between learning how to think like a scientist and knowing everything a scientist knows. While the latter is accessible through search engines and other AI tools, the former poses a pedagogical challenge and necessitates distinct approaches. This applies not just to science and scientist, but to all domains and professions.

Asking the right questions elicits the right answers from ChatGPT. It appears to know everything about everything, though it is not so. Therefore, at an introductory level, an AI curriculum from kindergarten to Master's may start with simple conversations by asking questions. In hours, it can step up to refining questions. The module may also include critical prompts with follow-up questions. One needs to get a grip on grey areas such as copyright and the scope of detection tools.

This is beyond mere upskilling. Why? AI feeds a lot of solutionism in a society rooted in the delusion that technology can solve all problems. Understanding AI concepts, its ethics, and knowing its biases will interrogate many techno-deceptions. Being conscious of them is important to develop a new form of soft skill: human-technology relations.

At the next level, focus on small practical projects. Automate language translation, create social media posts, break down complex topics, summarise books of your choice, and seek help on a problem that you encounter. Slowly one can learn to integrate Chat GPT into other tools, do sentiment analysis, set up a database and do anything that interests you.

We know the uses of ChatGPT in education range from tutoring with individualised attention to customised explanations. But what the education community urgently requires is an all-age AI curriculum or a self-designed syllabus for teachers. If you need a reference point, MIT introduced one last month. Learning AI need not be overwhelming. Instead, the possibility of AI could empower all of us. If not, it may lead to an AI-inequity.

I was showing a friend how to converse with a long unread document using the AI tool, ChatDOC. He exclaimed, "Reading is dead!" Similarly, in the first week of ChatGPT's launch, a teacher exclaimed, "Essay writing is dead!" In fact, nothing is dead. It is just that the reading and writing are alive in new ways. There is a new pedAIgogy. We need to design a curriculum for ourselves to make sense of these changes.

**Views expressed are personal**

The writer is a Deputy Secretary, University Grants Commission.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

**IIHS Urban Fellows Programme**
An initiative of the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), this is a scholarship-based, nine-month, full-time, interdisciplinary and residential programme.
**Eligibility:** Open to Indian citizens below 30 years with a Bachelor's degree in any subject or discipline and have basic proficiency in reading English
**Rewards:** Tuition fees and stipend
**Deadline:** April 24
**Application:** Online applications and by post to: The Admissions Committee IIHS Bengaluru City Campus, No. 197/36, 2nd Main Road, Sadashivanagar Bengaluru - 560 080
b4s.in/plus/IIHS4

**D.K. Bhave Scholarship**
An opportunity offered by the Savitribai Phule Pune University to encourage students to return to India after their Master's degree.
**Eligibility:** Open to Engineering graduates or those in the final year of B.E./B.Tech. (any branch) from institutes accredited to the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) and have secured merit-based 'confirmed admission' in a Master's course in Engineering and Technology in an accredited university in the U.S., Canada, Germany or the U.K.
**Rewards:** 50% of total cost of one year of programme
**Deadline:** May 20
**Application:** Online
b4s.in/plus/DKB3

**Arts University Bournemouth GREAT Scholarships**
Offered by the Arts University Bournemouth in partnership with the British Council and the GREAT Britain Campaign.
**Eligibility:** Open to Indian citizens with a valid passport and holding an offer/ invitation to study a one-year PG course at the university They must have a language certificate by May 15, 2023, and be overseas fee payers.
**Rewards:** £10,000 discount on the course fee for a year
**Deadline:** April 30
**Application:** Online
b4s.in/plus/GAU6

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

## SAVE THE DATE

**Noida International University opens admissions**
Noida International University has opened admissions for full-time UG and PG programmes in Medicine, Law, Nursing, Engineering, Business Management, Journalism and Mass Communication, School of Design, Allied Health Science, Education and Research, Liberal Arts, Fine Arts.
niu.edu.in

**M.Sc. Renewable Energy and Decarbonisation Technologies**
The University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, invites applications for this course starting this September. Scholarships are available.
**Eligibility:** A first- or second-class honour's degree (in Electrical or Electronic Engineering or Mechanical Engineering or cognate subject) from a U.K. university, or a similar institute internationally. IELTS requirement is 6.5 (no individual element below 5.5).
https://bit.ly/417UGhi

**M.Sc. Biochemical Engineering with Industrial Management**
The University of Sheffield, the U.K., invites applications for this one-year course starting this September.
**Eligibility:** Holders of a three- or four-year Bachelor's degree, with a minimum of 60% or first-class in Science, Technology and Engineering, from a recognised university; overall IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component, or equivalent.
https://bit.ly/3MYy1Qm

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Institute of Information and Communication Technology
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ENGINEERS WITH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
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BG-BGE

## INBRIEF

### Amit Shah to visit Chamundeshwari temple

Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Bengaluru on Sunday night for one more round of roadshows and strategy meetings with the party leaders in the run-up to the Assembly elections. Mr. Shah will visit Chamundeshwari temple in Mysuru on Monday before taking up roadshows in Gundlupet and Sakleshpur. Later, he will travel to Hubballi where he will stay for the night.

### Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to tour Mysuru-Chamarajanagar

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will tour parts of Mysuru and Chamarajanagar and campaign for the party candidates on Tuesday.

District Congress president B.J. Vijaykumar said Ms. Gandhi will address a public meeting at Halavarahundi in T. Narsipura on Tuesday between noon and 1 p.m. She is scheduled to take part in a women's convention at Gourishankar Convention Hall in Hanur in Chamarajanagar district from 3 p.m. Ms. Gandhi will arrive at K.R. Nagar in Mysuru district at 5 p.m. and take part in a roadshow from 5.30 p.m. onwards before leaving for Mysuru.

# 'Though BJP claims to follow Basavanna, it is actually acting against his ideology'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks against corruption, but the corrupt sit on his side at his rallies, says Rahul Gandhi in Vijayapura

**The Hindu Bureau**
HUBBALLI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at the Jana Samparka programme in Vijayapura on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said that the BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who claimed to be followers of 12th century social reformer Basaveshwara, were actually acting against his ideology.

Addressing a massive public rally in Vijayapura on Sunday evening, the Congress leader focused mostly on what Basaveshwara propagated and how the BJP leaders and its governments were allegedly doing things contrary to that.

Mr. Gandhi, who visited Kudalasangama in Bagalkot and offered puja at Basavanna's 'Aikya Mantapa' earlier in the day, said, "Basavannaji talked about treating everyone equally and not differentiating between rich and poor, caste and community. He spoke about the welfare of the poor. He did not say give money to the rich like Adani," he said.

He said Basavanna had asked people not to be afraid of telling the truth whatever the consequences. "I sought to know what is the relationship between the PM and Adani. First they switched off my mic in the Parliament, then they deleted my speech from the records. Then they sent me out of Parliament. It is not that truth should be only spoken in Parliament. Truth can be spoken anywhere," he said.

Referring to the BJP government in Karnataka as the most corrupt government in the country, he said, "The '40% sarkar' will get 40 seats only and Congress will get 150 seats. PM Modi speaks against corruption. And at his rallies the corrupt sit on his side."

Mr. Gandhi said as BJP leaders spoke a lot about Basavanna, he searched books on Basavanna to find out whether there was any mention about helping the rich and getting 40% commission. "What the BJP leaders speak on Basavanna and what they do is totally contrary to each other, he said.

He claimed that Congress had actually drawn its programmes based on what Basavanna had said. "Basavanna has spoken about welfare of women, and we came up with Grihalaxmi programme. We want equality and equal opportunities for all. So we will given 200 units of power for free and stipend for unemployed youth," he said.

During his speech, he dared PM Modi to release the details of the caste census carried out and demanded that reservation be based on the population and the 50% ceiling on reservation done away with.

Quoting the experience of Bharat Jodo Yatra, he said while BJP and RSS ideology was of hatred and violence, that of Congress was uniting the country on the basis of love and brotherhood. Former Minister M.B. Patil translated Mr. Gandhi's speech into Kannada. Earlier, Mr. Gandhi began his procession by garlanding the statue of Shivaji Maharaj. Many people took part in the rally.

# High command will decide who will be next CM: Bommai

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai holding a roadshow at Nelamangala on Sunday. ANI

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

On a day when the Jayavahini Yatra of the CM was launched ahead of elections, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said that the party high command will decide on who will be the CM if BJP is voted to power.

"My job is to ensure the return of the party to power. While the Central leadership will decide the Chief Minister in Congress, we have a democratic way based on which decisions are taken," he said speaking to presspersons here on Sunday. He accused the Congress of thinking about Lingayats only during polls.

Later, at the launch of his Jayavahini Yatra in Yelahanka, he ridiculed the the Congress' guarantee cards as 'waste cards'. "I am launching this yatra from the land of Nada Prabhu Kempegowda to remove the Congress. The guarantee card is like a lifeless visiting card and it is useless. It is only up to the election and useless after election." The Congress meant corruption, misrule, nepotism and injustice and hence it should be removed permanently, he added.

"JD(S) is waiting to come to power if no party failed to get the simple majority. The JD(S) promotes nepotism. The welfare of Karnataka is possible only through BJP. The BJP will come back to power with 130 seats and form the next government," he said.

He campaigned in Nelamangala, Yelahanka, Doddaballapur, Tumakuru Rural and Tumakuru City Assembly constituencies.

# Siddaramaiah's remarks on 'corrupt Lingayat CM' take controversial twist

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Siddaramaiah

Congress leader Siddaramaiah's remarks made in reference to Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai that "Lingayat Chief Minister of the BJP has ruined the State through corruption" has taken a controversial twist with the ruling BJP describing this as an insult to the dominant Lingayat community.

The BJP appeared to be using the episode to launch a counterattack at the Congress, which had accused it of ignoring leaders of the Lingayat community in the wake of two of its Lingayat leaders joining the Congress after being dined ticket.

Chief Minister himself launched the attack on Mr. Siddaramaiah on the day of Basava Jayanthi by comparing his remarks to that of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who had wondered why all the criminals have the surname Modi. The Chief Minister also maintained that Mr. Siddaramaiah's remarks had hurt the soul of Lingayats.

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi too took serious exception to Mr. Siddaramaiah's remarks and said it had shown how the Congress leaders view the Lingayat community.

BJP leader and MLA Arvind Bellad too joined the attack on Mr. Siddaramaiah and sought a response in this regard from former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, who recently quit the BJP and joined the Congress, alleging that the BJP had insulted the Lingayat leaders. Panchamashali seer Jayamruthyunjaya Swamiji too expressed pain over such remarks of Mr. Siddaramaiah and said it had hurt the community.

**Lawyers' petition**

Meanwhile, a group of lawyers form Lingayat community petitioned the Election Commission of India, seeking action against Mr. Siddaramaiah, accusing him of insulting the community itself.

On his part, Mr. Siddaramaiah clarified that his statement was being twisted by the BJP for political gains. Without taking the name of BJP National Organising General Secretary B.L. Santhosh, he alleged that the RSS leaders were hatching a conspiracy to politically finish off senior Lingayat leaders in the BJP by denying tickets to a host of them. They were also responsible for veteran BJP leader and Lingayat strongman B.S. Yediyurappa going to jail on corruption charges, he alleged and remarked that the BJP's Lingayat leaders were unnecessarily targetting the Congress instead of understanding the truth.

# Rahul visits Kudalasangama, celebrates Basava Jayanti

**The Hindu Bureau**
HUBBALLI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi offering puja at the 'Aikya Mantapa' at Kudalasangama in Bagalkot district. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

In what is being seen as the Congress' plan to reach out to the Lingayat community, party leader Rahul Gandhi visited Kudalasangama in Hunagund taluk of Bagalkot district on Sunday took part in Basava Jayanti celebrations. At the celebrations organised by the Basava Dharma Peetha of Kudalasangama, he said that 12th Century reformer Basaveshwara dared to tell the truth to society without any hesitation or fear.

Mr. Gandhi said, "It is easy to question others, but questioning ourselves is difficult. Basavanna not only questioned himself but also had courage to place the truth he found through questioning before society." He said that while many questioned themselves and also find the truth, they lacked the courage to reveal it before society. However, Basavanna became the 'Vishwa Guru' by daring to tell the truth. Those who tell the truth were threatened in society, he said.

Mr. Gandhi said credit for laying the foundation for India's democracy goes to Basavanna who founded the Anubhava Mantapa way back in the 12th Century. "When darkness engulfed society because of superstitions and blind belief, Basavanna came as a beacon of light," he said.

Siddarama Swami of Gadag Tontadarya Mutt said that by allowing women to participate in deliberations at the Anubhava Mantapa, Basavanna provided religious freedom to women for the first time in history.

Earlier, Mr. Gandhi visited Aikya Mantapa and Sangamanath Temple. The former CM Siddaramaiah, former Minister M.B. Patil and others took part.

**With Shettar**

Earlier in the day, after his arrival at the Hubballi airport before proceeding to Kudalasangama, Mr. Gandhi spent some time interacting with former CM Jagadish Shettar who quit BJP recently to contest as Congress candidate in Hubballi-Dharwad Central. Mr. Gandhi reportedly had a discussion with Mr. Shettar on the poll scenario.

# History-sheeter throws challenge to Priyank's hat-trick hope

KEY CONSTITUENCY

**Kumar Buradikatti**
KALABURAGI

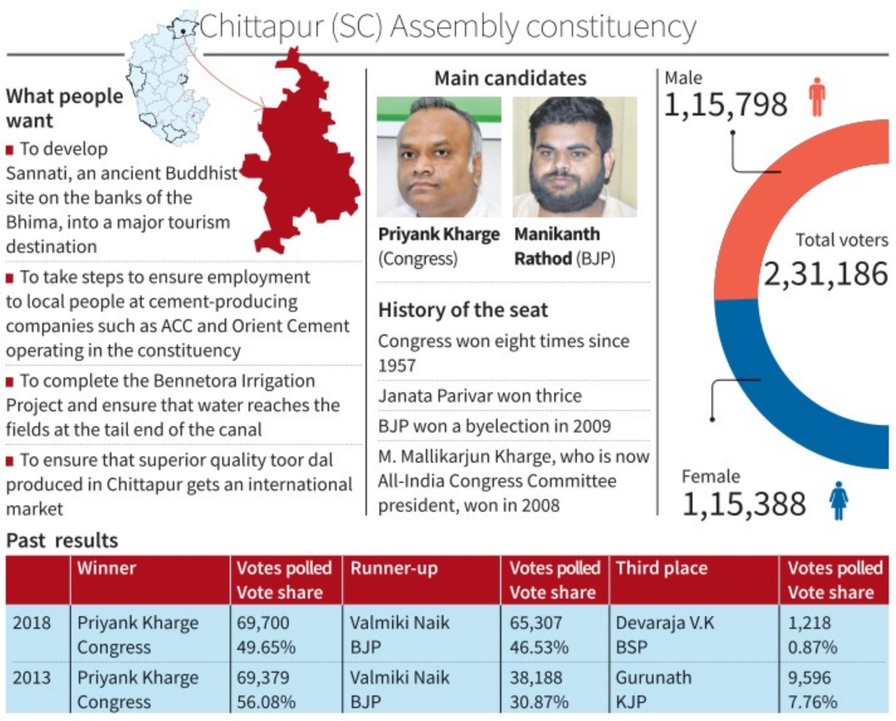
With history-sheeter Manikanth Rathod throwing his hat into the ring as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate to take on Congress leader Priyank Kharge at Chittapur (SC) in Kalaburagi district, the constituency is likely to witness a bitter poll battle. Mr. Priyank, the spokesperson of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee and incumbent MLA, is expecting a hat-trick.

Chittapur has traditionally been a Congress stronghold. Of the 14 general elections and one byelection held in the constituency since 1957, Congress has won 11. Vishwanath Patil Hebbal has won three elections - two on the Janata Party ticket and one on Janata Dal (Secular) ticket. BJP won a byelection. Mr. Hebbal later switched to BJP.

Congress veteran M. Mallikarjun Kharge (now All India Congress Committee president), who represented Gurumitkal (SC) constituency for eight consecutive terms in the Assembly moved to Chittapur in 2008 after Gurmitkal became the General constituency and Chittapur was reserved for SCs. He won his ninth election from here.

However, he resigned as MLA after he won the 2009 Lok Sabha elections from the Gulbarga segment necessitating the byelection in which his son Priyank Kharge was fielded. BJP's Valmiki Naik defeated Mr. Priyank with a margin of 1,606 votes to open his party's account in the constituency. But in 2013, Mr. Priyank defeated Mr. Naik with a margin of 31,178 votes and entered the Assembly. He became the IT and BT Minister in 2016 under the Siddaramaiah-led Congress Government. In 2018, Mr. Priyank again won against the same candidate, but with a margin of only 4,219 votes.

Mr. Priyank appeared to be in an advantageous position as the BJP did not have a strong candidate, after the demise of Valmiki Naik in 2021. Baburao Chinchansur, who had quit Congress and joined BJP after the 2018 elections, returning to Congress was an added advantage in the region in fetching votes of Koli community.




Past results

| | Winner | Votes polled Vote share | Runner-up | Votes polled Vote share | Third place | Votes polled Vote share |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2018 | Priyank Kharge Congress | 69,700 49.65% | Valmiki Naik BJP | 65,307 46.53% | Devaraja V.K BSP | 1,218 0.87% |
| 2013 | Priyank Kharge Congress | 69,379 56.08% | Valmiki Naik BJP | 38,188 30.87% | Gurunath KJP | 9,596 7.76% |

**Over 40 cases**

But the calculations are not the same after the entry of Mr. Rathod, a history-sheeter with 40 pending cases against him in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Telangana, ranging from illegal transportation of Anna Bhagya rice to crimes such as attempt to murder and drugs and narcotics smuggling. Kalaburagi City Police Commissioner had banished him from the city in September last year. However, he secured a stay for the order from the court.

On the other hand, Mr. Rathod has filed a complaint with the Lokayukta against Mr. Mallikarjun Kharge and Mr. Priyank alleging misappropriation of public lands allocated to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Smarak Kalyana. He had also alleged that he had a threat to his life from the Kharges. In a press conference, Mr. Rathod expressed his readiness to "shoot down" Mr. Priyank. However, the BJP's decision to give him the ticket has also upset many senior leaders in the party, some of whom have joined Congress.

**Caste equation**

The biggest problem for Mr. Rathod is that his community, the Lambani, is not decisive in the constituency. It has around 15,000 votes as compared to around 25,000 voters of SC-Right which Mr. Priyank belongs to. The strong community in the constituency is Lingayats with an estimated 65,000 votes. Popular Lingayat leaders like former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar and former Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi, besides local leaders, quitting the BJP, is expected to make a difference. Mr. Hebbal is a popular leader among Panchamasali Lingayats which is a dominant community with around 65,000 votes in the constituency.

However, the BJP is not ready to give up, particularly given the fact that Mr. Priyank has been a stringent critic of the saffron party, outspoken during episodes like the alleged Bitcoin scam and PSI recruitment scam.

In an interesting development, Subhashchandra Rathod, a Principal Civil Judge and JMFC court Judge at Gadag, resigned from service to contest the Assembly elections from Chittapur as JD(S) candidate. How the entry of a man belonging to Lambani community would impact the equation remains to be seen.

# Two IPS officers transferred as their relatives file papers

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Two senior IPS officers have been transferred from their present postings, in view of their close relatives filing nominations in the ongoing Assembly elections.

S. Girish, who was DCP, Whitefield, has been replaced by Dharmender Kumar Meena, and C.B. Ryshyanth, who was SP, Davangere, has been replaced by Dr. Arun K. While Mr. Girish is related to Congress candidate K.N. Rajanna, Mr. Ryshyanth is related to BJP candidate Munirathna.

**On EC directive**

Manoj Kumar Meena, CEO, Karnataka, said the two officers have been transferred on the directions of Election Commission of India (EC).

## Man held for threat to PM

**Press Trust of India**
KOCHI

The Kerala Police on Sunday arrested a man who allegedly sent a letter threatening a suicide bomb attack on Prime Minister Modi who will be visiting the State on Monday and Tuesday.

Kochi resident Xavier, who runs a business in the city, was arrested for allegedly writing the threatening letter in the name of another person. "We have arrested the man after probing the matter in a scientific manner. This was part of a personal vendetta. He wanted the person mentioned in the letter to be arrested," Police Commissioner K. Sethu Raman said.

The letter in Malayalam, written in the name of Kochi resident N.J. Johny, was received at the office of BJP State president K. Surendran who handed it over to the police last week. Mr. Johny on Saturday had met mediapersons and claimed that he was innocent.

# AIADMK to seek probe into T.N. Finance Minister's 'audio clip'

Palanivel Thiaga Rajan said the audio clip is not authentic. So we will take up the issue with the Centre, says Palaniswami

**The Hindu Bureau**
MADURAI/CHENNAI

Though Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan has said the 'audio clip' in which he was allegedly making charges of corruption within the ruling DMK is not authentic, the AIADMK will press the Union government to probe the issue independently, AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami said on Sunday.

Speaking to reporters at Madurai airport, he said Mr. Rajan had said the clip was not authentic. Therefore, the AIADMK would take up the issue with the Union government. "It is a serious allegation; as a responsible Opposition party, the AIADMK will pursue the matter," he said.

**Seeking action:** A BJP delegation submitting a representation, calling for an independent forensic audit of the audio clip, to Governor R.N. Ravi at the Raj Bhavan on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Asked about the amendments made to the Factories Act to allow 12-hour work, Mr. Palaniswami said it showed the "double standards" of CM M.K. Stalin and the ruling DMK. When he was in the Opposition, Mr. Stalin opposed any change to the Act. Now, after he became the Chief Minister, his government passed the Bill amending the Act. "Humans are not machines. Working for 12 hours will affect the health of workers. The government should withdraw the decision and drop the idea of holding talks with stakeholders," he said, adding that when its allies opposed the decision, the DMK should take note.

The AIADMK leader, who arrived here by a scheduled flight, was accorded a rousing reception, led by V.V. Rajan Chellappa and a large number of former Ministers, including Dindigul Srinivasan, Natham Viswanathan, R.B. Udayakumar and Sellur K. Raju. He drove to Virudhunagar district and offered his condolences to the family of former Minister K.T. Rajenthra Bhalaji, whose father passed away recently.

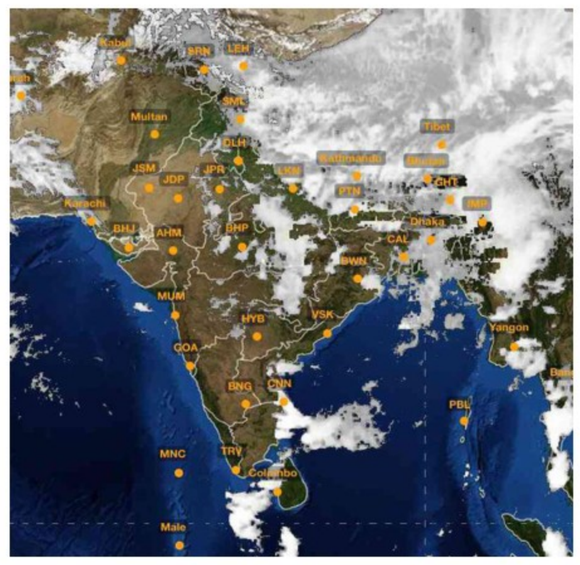
In Chennai, a BJP delegation called on Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi at the Raj Bhavan on Sunday evening and submitted a representation for an independent forensic audit of the audio clip. BJP State vice-presidents V.P. Duraisamy and Karu Nagarajan led the delegation.

"The party sought a forensic audit of the audio file for the benefit of the people of Tamil Nadu. The Governor has assured us action," Mr. Duraisamy said.

Replying to a question on Mr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan's contention that the audio clip was not authentic, Mr. Duraisamy said, "We are making an allegation. Let him prove that he is not guilty." Asked whether the party would urge the Union government to take action, Mr. Duraisamy said, "If the source of income is not proved, the course of action will continue."

## WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday




TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

**Forecast for Monday:** Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty wind likely at isolated places over Coastal Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Telangana, West Bengal, Jharkhand; with lightning at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karnataka

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agartala | — | 32.5 | 25.9 | Kozhikode | 0.1 | 37.0 | 27.5 |
| Ahmedabad | — | 39.3 | 25.5 | Kurnool | — | 39.4 | 27.5 |
| Aizawl | — | 30.8 | — | Lucknow | — | 36.8 | 21.0 |
| Allahabad | — | 39.1 | 22.8 | Madurai | — | 40.2 | 26.4 |
| Bengaluru | — | 34.8 | 23.5 | Mangaluru | — | 35.0 | 24.8 |
| Bhopal | — | 36.3 | 23.0 | Mumbai | — | 32.0 | 24.4 |
| Bhubaneswar | 7.0 | 36.0 | 20.0 | Mysuru | — | 36.4 | 22.3 |
| Chandigarh | — | 33.0 | 18.9 | New Delhi | — | 31.4 | 21.6 |
| Chennai | 1.0 | 35.4 | 28.9 | Patna | — | 35.6 | 22.4 |
| Coimbatore | — | 37.3 | 25.5 | Port Blair | — | 33.8 | 27.0 |
| Dehradun | — | 31.5 | 16.7 | Puducherry | — | 35.8 | 28.3 |
| Gangtok | 14.0 | 20.1 | 11.1 | Pune | — | 36.4 | 19.7 |
| Goa | — | 34.6 | 23.4 | Raipur | 14.2 | 39.5 | 19.5 |
| Guwahati | 1.0 | 31.5 | 19.0 | Ranchi | 14.0 | 31.6 | 18.6 |
| Hubballi | — | 36.0 | 21.0 | Shillong | — | 19.3 | 15.0 |
| Hyderabad | — | 37.2 | 24.0 | Shimla | — | 19.3 | 9.9 |
| Imphal | — | 30.6 | 17.4 | Srinagar | — | 22.5 | 3.4 |
| Jaipur | — | 35.8 | 24.0 | Thiruvananthapuram | — | 35.7 | 27.2 |
| Kochi | — | 35.2 | 27.4 | Tiruchi | — | 39.9 | 27.0 |
| Kohima | 1.0 | 27.6 | 18.2 | Vijayawada | — | 35.4 | 27.9 |
| Kolkata | 1.0 | 37.0 | 24.0 | Visakhapatnam | — | 34.1 | 27.0 |

*(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)*

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

| CITIES | $SO_2$ | $NO_2$ | CO | PM2.5 | PM10 | CODE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahmedabad | .30 | ..49 | .31 | ....72 | ...131 | ..... |
| Bengaluru | .03 | ..14 | .09 | ....62 | ....98 | ..... |
| Chennai | .02 | ..51 | 105 | ....57 | ....53 | ..... |
| Delhi | .15 | ..29 | .32 | ....44 | ...151 | ..... |
| Hyderabad | .08 | ..14 | .56 | ....93 | ....99 | ..... |
| Kolkata | .22 | ..21 | .17 | ....93 | ....78 | ..... |
| Lucknow | .09 | ..69 | .31 | ...257 | ...144 | ..... |
| Mumbai | ..— | ..23 | .47 | ....31 | ...208 | ..... |
| Pune | ..— | ..43 | .70 | ....38 | ....41 | ..... |
| Visakhapatnam | .17 | ..40 | .35 | ....49 | ....90 | ..... |

**Yesterday**

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sasaram, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 302 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Damoh, Madhya Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 25

**Air Quality Code:** Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

**$SO_2$:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

**$NO_2$:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

**CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

**PM2.5 & PM10:** Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

## TDP leader flays 'attack on Naidu'

**The Hindu Bureau**
VIZIANAGARAM

TDP Vizinaagaram district president Kimidi Nagarjuna on Sunday accused the Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government of resorting to destructive politics.

He deplored the attack on former CM N. Chandrababu Naidu in Yerragondlapalem and demanded the resignation of Minister Adimulapu Suresh, alleging that he had instigated violence in the meet on Friday.

# CPI to support Congress in 215 seats while locking horns in 7 constituencies in Karnataka

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The Communist Party of India (CPI) will extend support to the Congress in 215 seats in the Karnataka Assembly polls scheduled on May 10 while candidates of both the parties will face each other in seven seats.

In a statement released here, CPI state secretary Sati Sundaresh said the party is contesting in seven seats and supporting Congress in 215 seats. It has also extended support to Darshan Puttannaiah in Melukote while supporting CPI(M) candidate in Bagepalli.

The statement said that it would focus on defeating BJP in the Assembly elections and also prevent formation of unstable governments. The CPI has listed failure of the BJP government to address issues of unemployment, corruption and communalism, as well as steps to donate land and water resources of the State to the corporates as issues that it is opposed to.

"Though Congress and CPI have ideological differences on various issues, both parties have historically shared a common ground on issues related to rights of workers, middle class, poor and the oppressed sections of the society," AICC General Secretary in-charge of Karnataka Randeep Surjewala said on Sunday.

The focus of both parties is to oppose the 40% commission government led by Basavaraj Bommai and bring transparency in governance, he added.

He said, "The CPI has fielded its candidates in seven constituencies and in the remaining 215 constituencies, the cadre will support the Congress. This is a big decision taken by the respective party leaders in their fight against the BJP."

# Modi to lay foundation stone for country's first Digital Science Park in Kerala tomorrow

**The Hindu Bureau**
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone for India's first Digital Science Park coming up at the Technocity campus here on Tuesday, marking a milestone in Kerala's transformation into a knowledge economy.

Located adjacent to the Kerala University of Digital Sciences Innovation and Technology on around 14 acres of land, the ₹1,500 crore Digital Science Park project has been conceived as a multidisciplinary cluster-based interactive-innovation zone focused on digital technologies. The project is to be completed in two years.

Covering an area of 10 lakh sq. ft in two blocks, the park will facilitate industry and business units as well as technology start-ups from the domains of Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics, electronics, smart hardware, sustainable and smart materials in the initial phase.

An amount of ₹200 crore has been allotted by Kerala and the remaining amount will be generated from other sources including industry partners.

The park will be equipped with high-end research labs and facilities which will include clean rooms, material characterisation facility, integrated sensor labs, energy labs, motor and drives labs, RF and wireless testing labs, unconventional computing centre, high-end data centre, robotics labs, electronic design centre, software development labs, informatics and computing labs, and Blockchain and cybersecurity labs.

**Building for future:** The blueprint of the Digital Science Park in Thiruvananthapuram. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The park will become operational with the launch of its first centre on electronics system design focusing on analog and mixed signal systems, VLSI (very-large-scale integration), AI processors and allied areas.

The U.K.-based semiconductor and software design company ARM has signed an agreement with Digital University Kerala on the academic, research and start-up-related activities as part of this centre.

It will have a Centre for Artificial Intelligence with leading multinational technology company NVIDIA expected to join as a partner. The University of Manchester, University of Oxford and University of Edinburgh have also signed MoUs with DUK to engage in the development of the Digital Science Park.

# Unseasonal rain, hail wreak havoc on crops in Telangana

**The Hindu Bureau**
KARIMNAGAR

A spell of rain accompanied by gusty wind and hailstorms lashed many parts of the old undivided Karimnagar district in Telangana on Saturday night causing widespread damage to paddy, mango, chilli and other crops.

The paddy and mango growers bore the brunt of nature's fury for the second time this summer after witnessing a similar devastation caused by rain last month.

**5,000 acres affected**

According to preliminary estimates, paddy crop was completely damaged in over 5,000 acres in various villages, including Chamanpalli, Cherlabuthkur, Muqdumpur and Jublinagar in Karimnagar rural mandal.

Hailstorms reportedly wreaked havoc on several mango orchards in the middle of summer, dashing the hopes of mango growers of good returns.

Extensive damage to paddy, maize, mango and others crops was reported also from several villages in Jagtial, Mahabubabad, Jangaon and various other districts, which witnessed untimely rain and hailstorms on Saturday night.

Minister for Civil Supplies and Backward Classes Welfare G. Kamalakar visited some of the rain-affected villages in Karimnagar rural mandal on Sunday.

When a distressed farmer said rain had flattened the paddy crop on 25 acres of leased land, the Minister assured him of all possible help from the State government.

In separate incidents, a toddy tapper and a youth were killed after being struck by lightning near Kondagattu in Jagtial district and Turkala Maddikunta village in Peddapalli district respectively on Saturday.

The Minister said the State government had already released ₹ 8.50 crore as relief for crop damage during the earlier spell of unseasonal rain in the district and the amount will be disbursed soon.

## 'Margadarsi's operations are shrouded in secrecy'

**The Hindu Bureau**
VIJAYAWADA

Former Member of Parliament Vundavalli Arun Kumar has alleged that the business of Margadarsi Chit Funds Private Ltd. (MCFPL) has been shrouded in secrecy, which is evident from the fact that it has kept information related to public deposits held by it illegally to itself for close to two decades.

It was only after the Supreme Court's recent direction that the irregularities allegedly committed by the company started coming to the fore, Mr. Arun Kumar said while addressing a meeting on the case here on Sunday.

# Congress leader alleges corruption in installation of AI cameras in Kerala

**The Hindu Bureau**
THRISSUR

Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala has alleged massive corruption in the installation of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled CCTV cameras in Kerala. He said there was lack of clarity in the entire deal about giving contracts and subcontracts to install the cameras.

"Nobody is against traffic safety. But we will not allow corruption in the deal. It is people's money. There should be transparency in the project. There was a huge escalation of the project cost. I have all the documents with me," Mr. Chennithala said on Sunday. He said if the government failed to explain the details of the deal in four days, he would publish them.

> Nobody is against traffic safety. But there was a huge escalation in project cost. I have all the documents with me
>
> **RAMESH CHENNITHALA**
> Congress leader

Mr. Chennithala alleged that the government signed the deal for setting up an automated traffic enforcement system with KELTRON (Kerala State Electronics Development Corporation Limited) in 2020. The State PSU awarded the contract of the project to the Bengaluru-based SRIT India Private Ltd in violation of tender norms, he alleged.

"An amount of ₹151.22 crore has been allotted for the project. KELTRON should make it clear whether any other companies participated in the tender and if the tender procedures were followed," he asked. There was lack of clarity about the project cost of ₹232 crore, he said, questioning the government on escalation of the project cost.

# BJP will scrap Muslim quota if voted to power in Telangana, says Amit Shah

**The Hindu Bureau**
HYDERABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has described the reservation given to Muslims in Telangana in education and employment, and in the implementation of welfare schemes such as double-bedroom houses, as "unconstitutional" and warned that it will be withdrawn once the BJP forms the government in the State.

"The BJP will scrap all such unconstitutional reservation if voted to power in the next Assembly election," Mr. Shah said at a 'Vijay Sankalp Sabha' meet at Chevella in Rangareddy district on Sunday.

He appealed to the people "to bless the BJP" to root out the "corrupt" Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) rule in the State and said the BJP would ensure that "Mahalaxmi descended on Telangana by sitting on the lotus".

Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a public meeting at Chevella in Rangareddy district of Telangana on Sunday. G. RAMAKRISHNA

Mr. Shah said Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao was following AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi's agenda and not celebrating the Telangana Liberation Day fearing backlash from Mr. Owaisi and Muslims.

Training his guns on "KCR's corrupt family rule", Mr. Shah said people had now realised how large-scale corruption in welfare and development schemes was harming their future.

**'PM seat not vacant'**

"He [KCR] is dreaming of become the Prime Minister unaware that people are ready to oust him in Telangana itself. Changing his party's name from TRS to BRS won't keep him in the PM's seat," Mr. Shah observed and said the Prime Minister's seat was not vacant and Narendra Modi would be re-elected with complete majority.

"If voted to power in Telangana, the BJP would add 25% funds to the contribution made by the State and give it back for its development," Mr. Shah said.

## Defamation perils

### A dodgy case is being used to keep Rahul Gandhi disqualified

A striking feature of the Surat district court's order declining to stay the conviction of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is its unusual emphasis on his status as a Member of Parliament to justify his conviction and quantum of punishment. It is quite evident from a reading of 8th Additional Sessions Judge Robin P. Mogera's order that the court deems an offence to be worse if done by a legislator, that its impact on society is more deleterious than when it is committed by any other citizen, and that a harsher sentence than normally imposed is justified against a lawmaker. Yet, Mr. Gandhi's status as a parliamentarian matters little when it comes to the question whether his conviction ought to be stayed. His two-year prison term, awarded by a magistrate court in Surat for allegedly defaming the collective of people who have 'Modi' as their surname, has led to his disqualification from his membership of the Lok Sabha. While his sentence has been suspended till disposal of his appeal against his conviction, only a stay on the operation of his conviction could have restored his membership of the House. Judge Mogera has ruled that Mr. Gandhi failed to demonstrate that he will suffer irreversible and irrevocable damage if his conviction, which has also deprived him of the opportunity to contest elections, is not stayed. Selectively quoting from Supreme Court judgments, the judge has held that disqualification for being a legislator cannot be described as irreversible damage.

The order suffers from infirmities in reasoning and does not always adhere to precedents that do not prohibit treating disqualification from electoral contest as an exceptional circumstance warranting stay of conviction. The order holds that the complainant, being a former Minister, would have suffered harm to his reputation by Mr. Gandhi's remark. However, it fails to see that a conviction for defamation is itself quite rare, and a two-year punishment rarer. The judge justifies the maximum sentence by claiming that the words of a sitting Member of Parliament will have a larger impact on the public and that the sentence is "permissible in law". Criminal defamation is itself a questionable concept, as it can be invoked to silence criticism and harass opponents. It is inconceivable that political remarks made in an election campaign are used to secure a conviction for defamation and a jail term that precisely matches with the legal requirement to disqualify a person. Mr. Gandhi has further legal remedies, such as an appeal in the High Court, but it is lamentable that in a democracy, a dodgy defamation case can be stretched to such absurd levels as to deprive the parliamentary opposition of a key figure.

## No small change

### A market-linked stance seems to have been abandoned for small savings rates

Indian households' financial surpluses parked in small savings schemes operated by banks and post offices got a significant fillip this quarter, with the government raising the returns on most such schemes by 0.1 to 0.7 percentage points. This constituted the third successive hike in the rates that are reset each quarter. However, the breadth of the schemes covered was wider than on the last two occasions. For October 2022 to December 2022, a mere 0.1 to 0.3 percentage hike was announced on just five of the dozen small savings schemes. The first quarter of 2023 saw another 0.2 to 1.1 percentage point hikes on eight schemes. These increases came after a long pause in rates since April 2020. As the central bank started rate hikes last year and government bond yields (to which small savings rates are linked) hardened, there was a widening gap between the extant rates and the rates prescribed by the formula recommended by the Shyamala Gopinath panel that was officially adopted in 2016. This gap stood at 44 to 77 basis points (bps) after the meagre hikes of October (one basis point equals 0.01%).

Now, that gap is zero or marginal on six schemes, but for five schemes, it is still at 5 bps to 82 bps. These include the Public Provident Fund (PPF), whose rates have been frozen at 7.1% for three years now and should have fetched 7.72% last October and 7.76% for this quarter as per the formula. Government mandarins indicate they are not inclined to hike the PPF rate as its returns are tax-free, unlike in the case of other schemes. If that is so, it must publicly restate its policy position. Yet, the returns on the Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme, which are also tax-free, were hiked to 8% this quarter. Its only ostensible difference with the 1960s-origin PPF is it was launched by the current government to encourage savings for the girl child. The General Provident Fund rate for government employees has also been retained at 7.1%, but their dearness allowance has been hiked and a review of their benefits under the New Pension Scheme is underway. While PPF savings are capped at ₹1.5 lakh a year, this Budget raised the limits on a couple of small savings schemes to multiple times of that. It is perhaps no coincidence that the last time small savings rates were hiked across the board was in January 2019, ahead of the Lok Sabha battle. That several States vote this year and the general election looms in 2024 may have influenced the latest hikes as a feel-good device. An even-handed and transparent policy approach rather than quinquennial bouts of relief for small savers, would inspire more confidence.

# *India as most populous can be more boon than bane*

China is projected to hand over the baton of the most populous country to India by mid-2023. But for India, there are greater prospects for demographic advantage than serious concerns. The country must focus on reaping the available demographic dividend.

Considering the limited information for both China and India, especially in the absence of the Census 2021, it is difficult to predict the exact date on which this demographic order will change. United Nation reports suggest that India will have a population of 142.86 crore by mid-2023, which is 2.9 million higher than China's population of 142.57 crore. So, what are the opportunities and costs from being the most populous country? While the debate on population growth in India is not new, there are general and pessimistic views over this change in demographic rank order. Population control, therefore, is widely being seen as a panacea to avoid a grim future. There is a need to look deeper into the issue from an empirical and scientific perspective. Is it a dividend or a disaster? To answer this, we need to understand: the nature of population growth, size and its composition, as well as mechanisms through which a country translates demographic bonus into economic dividend.

**Srinivas Goli**

is an Associate Professor of Fertility and Social Demography at the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai

**Population growth, size, composition**

Population in itself is not a burden. Instead, it is the nature of population growth, size and its composition that decides when a population becomes a "resource" or a "burden". Population is a resource as long as the country's carrying capacity is intact. Carrying capacity is not just per capita availability of natural resources; it is a dynamic concept which changes according to changing technology, the efficiency of production and consumption systems of a country.

A deeper look into the trends of population growth, size and composition gives one an idea of whether India has an over-population that can disrupt carrying capacity. With total fertility rate of 2.0 in 2023, India is already at replacement level fertility, meaning two children replacing their parents. This indicates that the population is on a path toward stabilisation. However, it continues to experience positive growth, but in a decelerated mode until 2064, from which point it will become negative growth. The peak of India's population size will be around 169.6 crore in 2063.

With a mix of right policies, there are greater prospects for demographic advantage than demographic disaster

However, if we look at only the total population size, which is often assumed as the number of mouths to feed, it is grossly misleading. We need to look at the age composition of the population which tells us about available support ratios in the form of the number of the working age population (15-64 years) against the dependent population (0-14 years and 65 years and above).

Looking at the population composition of India, there are greater prospects for demographic dividend than a disaster. With 68% of the working age population in 2023, the country continues to have a demographic window of opportunity for the next 35 years to reap an economic dividend.

However, the availability of a demographic window of opportunity in itself will not automatically turn into economic dividend. The country needs to work on the key mechanisms which translate a demographic bonus into economic dividend.

**Relevant mechanisms**

There are four key mechanisms that translate a demographic bonus to economic dividend: employment, education and skills, health conditions and governance.

Employment or job creation is an important mechanism to translate demographic bonus to economic dividend. If India is able to generate sufficient and quality jobs for its bulging working age population, realisation of demographic dividend will become a reality.

Education, skills generation and ensuring a healthy lifespan by preventing diseases and disabilities are also important channels that translate demographic opportunity into economic gains. A skilled and healthy workforce is critical not only for better productivity of an economic activity but it also reduces excessive public spending and helps in greater capital creation.

Good governance, reflected through conscientious policies, is another important aspect for reaping demographic dividend as it helps in creating a healthy environment for increasing efficiency and productivity of the population.

**In perspective**

Opportunities and costs are the two sides of the coin when it comes to being the world's largest populous country. However, a relatively younger population of India provides higher support ratios – there is lesser disease, disability and caring burden. India's opportunity must be looked at in comparison to the consequences of population decline and ageing across some countries that include Japan, China, the United States and other major economies. A majority of them have been implementing pronatalist policies to improve birth rates. However, these actions have shown to be largely ineffective. Once fertility tends to decline, it is hard to reverse it.

In this context, India has the potential to become a worldwide market for both production and consumption, with lower manufacturing costs due to a relatively cheaper workforce. This is very much evident in India's IT sector.

Available demographic opportunity in the form of a greater share of the working age population has the potential to boost per capita GDP by an additional 43% by 2061, provided the socio-economic and political enabling environment is conducive.

At the same time, a total fertility rate of less than 1.8 may not be economically beneficial for India. Therefore, drastic population control methods run the risk of inducing forced population ageing, which would result in the nation "getting old before getting rich".

What is causing more damage than climate change and economic harm is invisible and unsustainable production, consumption and unequal distribution more than visible population size.

What the country needs are policies that support an enabling environment that can provide high-quality education, good health care, respectable employment opportunities, good infrastructure, and gender empowerment. If India falls short in this, its "demographic dividend" can become a "demographic disaster".

# *A new troika for India's northeast region*

The region comprising India's eight northeastern States (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim) is undergoing dramatic change. It has overcome several (but not all) security challenges and is now heading toward economic development. Political changes have been helpful. So is the extensive web of linkages with neighbouring Bangladesh. Besides, Japan has emerged as a significant development partner for both India and Bangladesh.

The third India-Japan Intellectual Dialogue (April 11-12, 2023), hosted by the Asian Confluence (ASCON), in Agartala, Tripura, was an ideal opportunity to assess the evolving thinking of experts and policymakers. It showed that the current decade may produce path-breaking changes in the northeast, bringing the troika of Bangladesh, India and Japan closer.

**Rajiv Bhatia**

is Distinguished Fellow, Gateway House, and a former Ambassador to Myanmar

**Vision and opportunities**

One of the most important projects is the development of Matarbari Deep Sea Port (DSP) on the southeastern coast of Bangladesh. It is being constructed with Japanese assistance and is scheduled to be operational in 2027. A recent ASCON study envisages this port to be "a game changer". To be optimally viable, the port will have to cater to the needs of Bangladesh and India's northeast. The long-term vision is for Bangladesh and the northeast to become a hub and key industrial corridor of this region, serving a population of 220 million.

The goal of connecting a large part of South Asia with Southeast Asia can be steered by the triad of Bangladesh, India and Japan using the northeast as a focal point

Hiroshi Suzuki, Japan's Ambassador to India, emphasised at the conference that while increased connectivity of roads and railways is important, it is not enough without the creation of regional industrial value chains. Hence, rapid industrialisation in the sectors where the northeast enjoys competitive advantage assumes significance. This plan is sound because it ensures that the new connectivity links will be fully utilised and productive. Roads and ports must be accompanied by job opportunities that can come only from new industrial enterprises set up with national and foreign investment. A joint focus on comprehensive connectivity and accelerating industrialisation in Bangladesh and the northeast is likely to be a priority.

The northeast is blessed with vast natural resources. Its strategic location, sharing borders with Nepal, Bhutan, China, Bangladesh and Myanmar, is an asset. Creating value chains and manufacturing products should encompass diverse sectors such as agro-processing, man-made fibres, handicrafts, assembly of two-wheelers and perhaps mobile phones, and pharmaceuticals. The population, with its good education, already excels in the services sector drawing potential investor attention.

**The challenges**

Of course, there are challenges that can be addressed by expanding policy convergence and taking people along. Also, Japan as a single investor in the northeast is unworkable. Indian companies too must invest. India must ease restrictions on the flow of investments from Bangladesh. The three governments should also forge closer linkages of economic cooperation.

An important argument was advanced by Bangladesh's Shahriar Alam, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. He stressed that Dhaka and New Delhi have succeeded in "almost restoring" the pre-1965 infrastructure connectivity between India and Bangladesh and are now going beyond it. But, Mr. Alam added, Bangladesh which has facilitated so much connectivity, now needs "reciprocity" from other countries (read: India) so that it is better connected with other neighbours (read: Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar). By facilitating it, India can assist Bangladesh in becoming an integral part of the Act East Policy.

Two additional points require consideration. First, when issues of regional cooperation and integration are discussed, scant attention seems to be paid to the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), which is self-defeating. This must change so that the grouping progresses towards its vision of establishing the Bay of Bengal Community (BOBC).

Second, the goal of connecting a large part of South Asia with Southeast Asia requires an astute pilot. This leadership can come from the triad of Bangladesh, India and Japan (BIJ). A BIJ Forum should be launched first at the level of Foreign Ministers, a move that will be welcome in the northeast.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Poonch attack**

The terror attack in Poonch has happened despite a much touted claim of improvement on the ground. How safe will holding the G-20 meeting in Srinagar next month be?

**Ravi Mathur,**
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Five soldiers being attacked in Poonch in a terror attack exposes the grave lapses in routine patrolling and how intelligence reports should be worked upon in sensitive areas. Despite the overwhelming presence of Army and paramilitary forces all over Jammu and Kashmir, and the border, extremist elements appear to be continuing to strike at will. Insurgency in the Valley is a direct fallout of how the successive regimes have handled the Kashmir issue and the way in which bilateral ties with Pakistan have panned out over the decades.

Political will to establish cordial relations in order to find lasting peace on the ground on both sides of the border is key to ending extremism.

**Prabhu Raj R.,**
Bengaluru

**Importance of Karnataka**

The Karnataka Assembly election, and a major State election, will be a crucial test for the Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge; more so because it happens to be his home State (Page 1, April 22). Winning Karnataka would definitely enhance the stature of Mr. Kharge and help him to manage the affairs of the Congress better.

But, will he be able to pull off a win, given the internecine battles within the party in Karnataka? It is sad that even at this stage when the party should have been formulating strategies to fight the several State and general elections, the party president is struggling to make peace between regional leaders. The party needs to concentrate on the larger issue of preparing the party to face the challenges ahead as well as uniting the rest of the Opposition to try and take on the formidable ruling party.

**Kosaraju Chandramouli,**
Hyderabad

**'Caged parrot'**

It is doubtful whether former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satyapal Malik would have been summoned by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) over an alleged insurance "scam" had he not raised certain questions related to national security, recently. His summoning by the investigating agency only creates the perception that the agency has become a willing tool at the behest of the powers that be. Will the CBI ever admit or understand that its credibility and standing depend on its acting without fear or favour?

**C.G. Kuriakose,**
Kothamangalam, Kerala

**'Evolution' dropped**

I am writing this letter to express my disappointment with the decision by the National Council of Educational Research and Training to exclude the topic of 'evolution' from the class 10 science textbook.

"Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution," is a quote by geneticist and evolutionary biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky, highlighting the critical importance of understanding evolution in the study of biology.

Evolution is a fundamental concept that explains the diversity of life on our planet and the underlying mechanisms responsible for the evolutionary changes.

The exclusion of evolution from the science curriculum is a significant loss for our students. It not only hinders their ability to grasp the subject matter but also denies them the opportunity to learn about one of the most exciting and thought-provoking fields of science.

Furthermore, the exclusion of evolution from the curriculum sends a wrong message to the students, suggesting that the scientific consensus on evolution lacks credibility or is open to debate. It is essential to remember that evolution is not just a theory but a well-established scientific fact supported by overwhelming evidence.

I urge the NCERT to reconsider its decision and include the topic of evolution in the class 10 science curriculum. It is time we acknowledge the importance of evolution in the field of biology and offer our students a comprehensive and well-rounded education.

**Aneesh E.M.,**
Malappuram, Kerala

**In a 'whiter' vein**

The snippet, "What is the cause of hair turning grey?", was interesting ('Science' page – 'Question Corner', April 23). I recall the quote by Lailah Gifty Akita, the writer: "The paradox of life; I wish to have a healthy long life. But no one wants to show the glory of the grey hair."

**Avinash Godboley,**
Dewas, Madhya Pradesh

**At Chepauk**

It was a real clinical performance by Chennai Super Kings (CSK) against Sunrisers Hyderabad, at Chepauk on April 21. As things stand, CSK is playing like a champion team, though it lacks a good pace battery.

One hopes to see CSK progressing smoothly and win to give a fitting farewell to Captain Cool.

**Vinay Mahadevan,**
Al Nahada 1, Dubai, U.A.E

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address.

# The 'Opposition unity' caution

**Praveen Chakravarty**
is a senior office bearer of the Congress party

An old phrase is now the shiny new entrant in India's electoral lexicon – opposition unity. It is an electoral strategy to vanquish the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) by ensuring a direct contest between the BJP and a united Opposition in every constituency, preventing a split in votes.

It supposes that if India's entrenched multi-party democracy can be turned into a two-party democracy in each State, the ruling BJP can be defeated easily. The faith in this idea is so strong that many Opposition leaders have even alluded that the blatant subjugation of democracy by the BJP, with the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi, may be a blessing in disguise to unite the Opposition and evict the BJP electorally. Can India's elections be neatly engineered through such mathematical shortcuts and arithmetic ballot measures?

The foundational premise for the 'Opposition unity' strategy is that the BJP won only 37% of the votes in the 2019 election and that 63% of Indians voted against the party. The argument goes that if the 63% of the voters can be united, then it ensures an automatic opposition victory. This is a fallacy. The BJP only contested 80% of the seats in 2019, leaving the rest to its alliance partners. In the seats that the BJP won, it secured well more than half the votes, implying that no amount of 'opposition unity' could have prevented its victory. Together with its alliance partners, the BJP won the support of 45% of all voters. However, this still does not mean that the remaining 55% disapproves of the BJP and can be united to vote against them.

Let us suppose that a woman voter in Uttar Pradesh had four major choices of parties to vote for – the Samajwadi Party (SP), the BJP, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), and the Congress – and she chose to vote for the SP. Does this mean that she disapproves of the other three parties or just the BJP? If her primary motivation is to vote for the party that represents her best, then it may be inferred that she disapproves of all other parties equally. In which case, it cannot be assumed that she will transfer her vote seamlessly to a united Opposition candidate. She may even prefer to vote for the BJP, if the BJP instead of the SP is on her ballot representing the united Opposition. This is exactly what happened in Uttar Pradesh in 2019 when the BJP increased its vote share from 2014, despite the SP and the BSP coming together.

A united political Opposition to safeguard India's democracy and fight for a level playing field is necessary

### Need for representation

Democratic politics at its core is about representation of interest groups. In an extremely diverse society such as India, the proliferation of numerous political parties is a reflection of the need for representation for many diverse groups. In the last six decades, there have always been 20 or more parties represented in Parliament. This staggering political diversity is the steam whistle of the pressure for representation in a very diverse Indian society. Artificially suppressing this outlet through a forced and manufactured unity of political parties can backfire, if not articulated carefully to the public. Electoral unity of political parties does not immediately mean unity of their voters.

To be clear, this is not to imply that there can be no amalgamation of different parties along ideological or identity axes. There are already synergistic alliances between the Congress and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in Maharashtra, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in Bihar, and the National Conference in J&K. In fact, in the 2019 election, the Congress contested the lowest number of seats, forging alliances as widely as possible, but to no avail. New alliance formations such as the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Thackeray) may add more synergy.

'Opposition unity' with a show of joint hands of Opposition leaders for television cameras in New Delhi may not immediately lure voters to discard State barriers and vote for a united Opposition. If any, the last few years have only further thickened State political boundaries. It is far-fetched to believe that an alliance, say between the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Congress in West Bengal will lure a voter in Gujarat or Odisha to vote for the Opposition in a national election.

This is not to say that there is no scope for a united fight against the ruling party. A united Opposition is both a necessary and a powerful weapon to fight for a level playing field and rights of Opposition politics in India's democracy. Misuse of institutions, monopoly of media and money, and intimidation of Opposition have to be fought against vehemently, which a strong, united Opposition is best positioned to do.

A joint political action against the ruling party by all Opposition parties can reverberate much louder across the nation. But this does not mean a combined electoral front of these parties will translate into votes for the joint Opposition in first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting system. It is important not to conflate united political action of Opposition parties with a united act of voting by each party's supporters.

A united political Opposition to safeguard India's democracy is necessary. But it is no magic pill for easy gains in an FPTP electoral system with many parties in the fray. To the contrary, it calls for more work by each party to explain the rationale for a united Opposition alliance to their support base so as to not risk turning them away, and be complacent in the belief that it is a shortcut to electoral success.

Opposition unity is a potent political force, but does not mean it can be a powerful electoral force too.

# Embracing the Telangana dialect

*Balagam* showcases family values and the unique linguistic identity of the State

STATE OF PLAY

**P. Sridhar**
sridhar.ponnam@thehindu.co.in

Debut director Venu Yeldandi's Telugu film, *Balagam*, continues to receive rave reviews 50 days after its release, holding the audience receptive to the message of family values and bonding, and showcasing the unique linguistic identity of Telangana dialect.

Mr. Venu, a noted comic actor, in his directorial debut touched the heartstrings with a compelling storyline woven around death rituals and family bonding with heart-wrenching songs set against a rural backdrop.

What makes the movie more gripping, winning critical acclaim and awards, is the realistic portrayal of the inherent local traditions and culture of Telangana, especially the folk songs representing human values that have been prevalent for centuries in the State.

### Mass screenings

The huge patronage for the film is evident from the screening of the movie in various villages and residential colonies across the nook and corner of Telangana in the past few weeks.

The film impacted the mindset of the audience in a positive way with instances of several siblings patching up their old differences and coming together after watching the movie at Laxmanchanda in Nirmal district, Vanaparthy in Jangaon district and elsewhere in the State.

Its popularity is growing with each passing day with Tourism Minister V. Srinivas Goud announcing the screening of the film at select places




in Hanamkonda district on the occasion of International Day of Families on May 15.

The distinctive Telangana dialect is now increasingly being embraced by filmmakers of Tollywood due to its unique charm and popularity.

Such has been its fame that more than a dozen movies, including the popular Telugu movie *Fidaa* and the latest film, *Dasara*, starring actor Nani, adopted the Telangana dialect.

*Balagam* is the first full-length meaningful cinema on Telangana culture since the formation of Telangana in 2014, said Varala Anand, a film critic and recipient of the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award for the year 2022.

The audience identified themselves with the movie due to the realistic portrayal of the rituals associated with the patriarch's death and relations between family members and extended family in the emotional drama.

*Balagam* is being screened in several villages in the old undivided Karimnagar district, reminiscent of the screening of some of the best Indian movies of all time, including the legendary film personality Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* under the aegis of the Karimnagar Film Society in rural areas a few decades ago.

The highlight of the movie is the song sung by folk singers Darshanam Mogilaiah and his wife, Komuramma, in the climax of the film conveying the essence of family bonding.

The success of *Balagam* helped bust several myths and break the monotony in the film industry, proving a trendsetter for other filmmakers from Telangana to follow suit, said noted Telangana writer Peddinti Ashok Kumar.

It proved beyond any doubt that content-driven movies will get patronage from audiences with engaging storylines.

*Mallesham*, the Telugu biopic on ikat weaver and innovator Chintakindi Mallesham, received wide accolades in 2019, said Mr. Ashok, who had written dialogues for the film.

### Due recognition

It is a matter of pride that Telangana dialect is getting due recognition in Telugu films of late, he said, rueing that the dialect was sidelined and used for the antagonist and comic roles in various films in the past.

The vibrant potential of the scenic spots of Telangana and talents of local filmmakers is yet to be tapped fully, he added.

He urged the government to extend support to filmmakers and directors in the State to unravel their potential for making films.

*Balagam* is proving to be a boon for the society in giving a fillip to Telangana's folk arts, promoting local talents and social values in the society, said Vuppula Anjani Prasad, honorary president, Telangana Sarpanchula Sangham.

It is heartening that Telangana filmmakers are proving their mettle by exploring fresh themes and contemporary issues, thereby contributing their mite to foster social cohesion.

# Russia's oil imports to India rises further, trade deficit balloons

India accounts for more than 70% of the seaborne supplies of the grade so far this month and China for about 20%

DATA POINT

**The Hindu Data Team**
**Reuters**

In February 2023, Russia surpassed Saudi Arabia to become the second biggest exporter of crude oil to India in FY23. Iraq continued to retain the top spot, though the gap is closing fast. In the four-month period between November 2022 and February 2023, Russia took over the top spot, while the shares of Saudi Arabia and Iraq in India's oil imports are fast decreasing.

**Chart 1** shows the share of select top countries in India's crude oil imports in the April-February period for the past four financial years. As can be observed, Russia's share zoomed to second-highest in FY23 from a negligible proportion in the previous years.

**Chart 2** shows the share of select top countries in India's crude oil imports in the last seven months. The chart shows that Russia is pulling away from Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and is leading by quite a distance.

While the rise of imports from Russia was due to surging inflow of crude oil, India is taking in other products too. In FY23 (till February), 50% of India's imports of project goods – input materials required in infrastructure projects – were from Russia. Close to 30% of newsprint rolls, mineral/chemical fertilizers and sunflower/cotton seed oil each came from Russia in FY23 (**chart 3**).

India and China have snapped up the vast majority of Russian oil in April at prices above the Western price cap of $60 per barrel, according to traders and Reuters calculations. Oil loadings from Russia's western ports in April will rise to the highest since 2019, above 2.4 million barrels per day, shipping sources told *Reuters*. This means that the Kremlin is enjoying stronger revenues despite the West's attempts to curb funds for Russia's military operations in Ukraine. A G7 source told *Reuters* on April 17 that the Western price cap would remain unchanged for now, despite pressure from some countries such as Poland, to lower the cap to increase pressure on Moscow. The advocates of the cap say that it reduces revenues for Russia, while allowing oil to flow, but its opponents say it is too soft to force Russia to backtrack on its activities in Ukraine.

India and China have not agreed to abide by the price cap, but the West had hoped the threat of sanctions might deter traders from helping those countries buy oil above the cap. India accounts for more than 70% of the seaborne supplies of the grade so far this month and China for about 20%, *Reuters* calculations show. Average discounts for Urals were at $13 per barrel in Indian ports and $9 to ICE Brent in Chinese ports.

But the sudden surge in oil imports meant that India's trade deficit with Russia ballooned in recent years. As shown in **chart 4**, India exports pharma products, crustaceans, tea, coffee and some other products but relatively of much lesser value. And so, India's trade deficit with Russia has surged in FY23, as shown in **chart 5**.

On April 18, India and Russia agreed to address trade deficit and market access issues as New Delhi sought to narrow its trade imbalance with Russia. *Reuters* reported in November that Russia was potentially seeking to import more than 500 products from India. Indian representatives said, in December, that they shared a list of Indian products with Moscow for access to Russian markets.

Meanwhile, Russia's richest people added $152 billion to their wealth over the past year, buoyed by high prices for natural resources and rebounding from the huge loss of fortunes they experienced just after the Ukraine war began, *Forbes Russia* said. Also, recently Pakistan placed its first order for discounted Russian crude oil.

## Trade equations

The charts are based on data collated from the Commerce ministry's import-export data bank and the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy

**Chart 1:** The share of select top countries in India's crude oil imports in the April-February period for the past four years

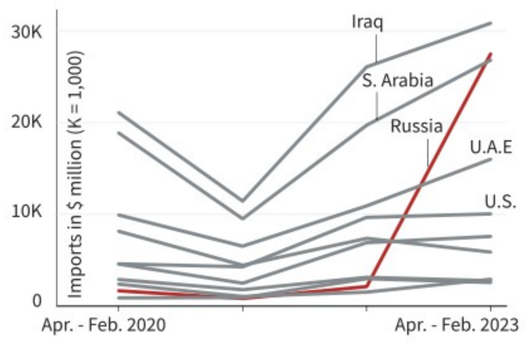
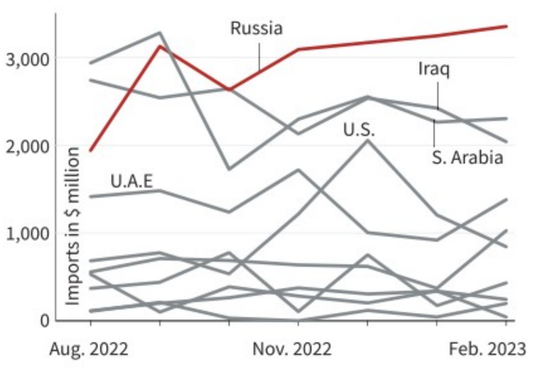



**Chart 2:** The share of select top countries in India's crude oil imports in the last seven months




*The charts 1 and 2 show the share of petroleum oil exports from various countries to India. The four-digit-level HS code accessed was 2709 which shows the figures for petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals (crude) imports from various nations to India*

**Chart 3:** The chart shows India's imports from Russia (vertical axis) and its share in India's total imports (FY23)

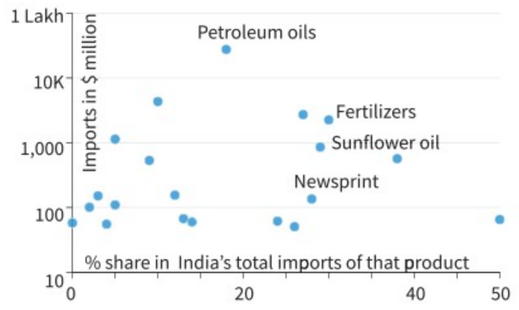



**Chart 4:** The chart shows India's exports to Russia (vertical axis) and its share in India's total exports (FY23)

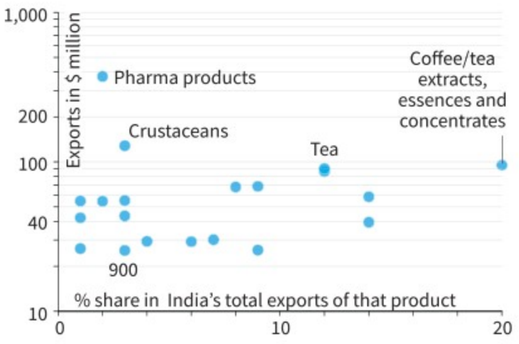
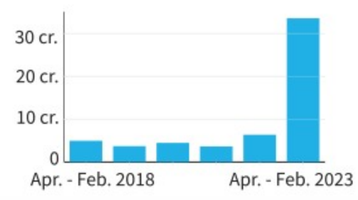



**Chart 5**
India's trade deficit with Russia has surged in FY23. The chart shows deficit in $ million




FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

**FIFTY YEARS AGO** APRIL 24, 1973

## Payment by tourists in foreign currency urged

New Delhi, April 23: The Joint Committee on the Foreign Exchange Regulation Bill has recommended that to check leakage of foreign exchange, the government should have power to direct non-residents (tourists) to pay for such goods and services, as may be notified, in foreign exchange. The committee has accordingly inserted a new clause in the Bill.

The report of the committee, presented to the Lok Sabha to-day by its Chairman, Mr. Satish Chandra, does not contain any major modifications in the comprehensive Bill aimed at the conservation and proper utilisation of the foreign exchange resources of the country.

Another new provision made by the committee relates to regulation of Indian participation in trading, commercial and industrial activities abroad to safeguard against misuse of foreign exchange. The committee has by a new Sub-Clause to Clause 24 of the Bill provided that restrictions on holding any immovable property outside India by a person resident in India would not apply to a foreign national resident of India. The committee has also amended the Clause 29 of the Bill to make it clear that a citizen of India, even if resident outside India, should not be required to obtain permission from the Reserve Bank of India for acquisition, holding or disposing of immovable property in India. In regard to restrictions on employment of foreigners covered by Clause 38 of the Bill, the joint committee has made an amendment to the effect that a foreigner taking up gainful employment or occupation in India should require the Reserve Bank's permission only in cases where liability for remittance of foreign exchange would arise.

**A HUNDRED YEARS AGO** APRIL 24, 1923

## Raw cotton

The receipts of loose cotton at spinning mills at the Madras Presidency from February 4, 1923 to April 14, 1923 amounted to 48,654 bales of 400 lb. lint against an estimate of 4,42,800 bales of the total drop of 1922-23. The receipts in the corresponding period of the previous year were only 25,240 bales. 17,819 bales mainly of pressed cotton were received at spinning mills and 10,997 bales were exported by sea, while 4,694 bales were imported by sea, mainly by Bombay.

## From Page One

# Amritpal arrested in Punjab, moved to Assam

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said the law was taking its own course in the case of Mr. Amritpal, who was a "stooge in the hands of forces inimical to the State and country", and that no action was being taken against innocent people. "The State could have arrested Amritpal on March 18 itself, but they never wanted any bloodshed and today the separatist leader has been arrested without firing a single bullet," he said.

The Shiromani Akali Dal welcomed the decision of Mr. Amritpal to "hand himself over" to the law. Senior party leader Daljit Singh Cheema alleged that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government was trying to "deliberately hype the Amritpal issue by requisitioning paramilitary forces and imposing emergency-like curbs on media and intelligentsia".

It was on March 18 that the Punjab Police launched a crackdown against Mr. Amritpal and members of his outfit. The protesters who stomed the Ajnala police station carried the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs, as a shield. The AAP government of Punjab caved in and released Mr. Toofan, but the incident acted as a trigger, following which the Punjab Police launched a coordinated crackdown against the pro-Khalistan propagator.

Mr. Amritpal's rise to fame, or notoriety, started last year when he was anointed as the head of the WPD, a social organisation established by actor-turned-activist Deep Sidhu, who actively participated in the year-long farmers' agitation against the three farm laws drafted by the Centre and raised Punjab-centric issues. He died in a road accident in February last year.

Nine of Mr. Amritpal's aides – Daljit Singh Kalsi, Papalpreet Singh, Kulwant Singh Dhaliwal, Varinder Singh Johal, Gurmeet Singh Bukkanwala, Harjit Singh, Bhagwant Singh, Basant Singh and Gurinderpal Singh Aujla – have also been lodged in the Dibrugarh jail. Mr. Amritpal faces several charges under the Indian Penal Code.

# NCPCR, NCSC officials visit W.B. over Dalit girl's murder

**The Hindu Bureau**
KOLKATA/NEW DELHI

A row has erupted over the alleged rape and murder of a teenaged girl at Kaliaganj in Uttar Dinjapur district of West Bengal with the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights targeting each other over the incident.

On Sunday, NCPCR Chairperson Priyank Kanoongo visited Kaliaganj and met the family members of the deceased Dalit girl. Mr. Kanoongo said *prima facie* it seems the police had not recorded their statement.

However, the West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights (WBCPCR) accused the NCPCR of "doing politics over the dead bodies of children in West Bengal".

### 'Need report in 3 days'

The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) Vice-Chairperson Arun Halder too visited the village and said district authorities and the State Director-General of Police (DGP) have been directed to submit a report to him within three days.

# Cases of aviation staff caught smuggling gold doubled in 2022-23

Of the nearly 4,000 kg of smuggled gold found between April 2022 and February, 63% was in airports; 29 employees of airlines and airports were held for their involvement in smuggling cases

**Vikas Dhoot**
NEW DELHI

With global gold prices soaring over the past year and the government raising import duties on the yellow metal, gold smuggling seems to have become an attractive side hustle for some aviation staff. Between April 2022 and February 2023, the Department of Revenue Intelligence and customs authorities booked 29 cases involving about 81 kg of seized gold where airline cabin crew members or airport staffers were implicated. By February, 29 such staff had been arrested. This is twice the average number of such cases detected in the previous three years, including the pre-COVID year of 2019-20.

### Smuggling spike

The highest number of cases involving aviation staffers were detected at the Chennai airport, leading to the arrests of three of them for seven different cases involving over 9 kg of smuggled gold. Eight cabin crew and ground staff were arrested at Mumbai, for facilitating the smuggling of 32 kg of gold in five cases.

India's official gold imports fell around 24% to $35 billion in 2022-23, as prices surged and the rupee turned weaker. But this has coincided with a sharp spike in authorities' detection of gold smuggled into the country, with nearly 4,000 kg of smuggled gold found in the first 11 months of 2022-23, the highest in four years. Over 63% of the smuggled gold was detected at airports, with the rest detected in places such as Darbhanga, Mumbai, Pune, Ludhiana, Surat, Chennai, Madurai and Bengaluru, after it had arrived in India, as per data from the Department of Revenue.

"We have noticed an uptick in the involvement of cabin crew and airport staff in some cases of attempted smuggling of gold and action is taken against such persons in accordance with law," a senior revenue official said.

Of the total 29 smuggling cases booked in 2022-23 where airport and airline staffers were found involved, arrests are yet to be made in six cases. That includes a case each at Ahmedabad, New Delhi and Bengaluru airports, and three cases involving over 8 kg of smuggled gold at Calicut airport.

### Silver smuggling dips

The amount of smuggled silver seized dropped sharply from almost 5,200 kg in 2021-22 to a four-year low of under 450 kg in 2022-23, with just 15% of it caught at airports. Only two cases of silver smuggling were detected at airports last year, none of which involved cabin crew or ground staff.

**Gold seizures**

The table lists the airports with the highest gold seized. Mumbai airport, followed by Delhi and Chennai, recorded the highest quantity of gold seized in 2022-23

| Airports with highest gold seized in 2022-23 | Gold seized (in kg) |
|---|---|
| Mumbai | 604.5 |
| Delhi | 374.5 |
| Chennai | 306.4 |
| Calicut | 291.3 |
| Cochin | 154.5 |
| Hyderabad | 124.3 |

# India sends aircraft, ships for evacuation from Sudan

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

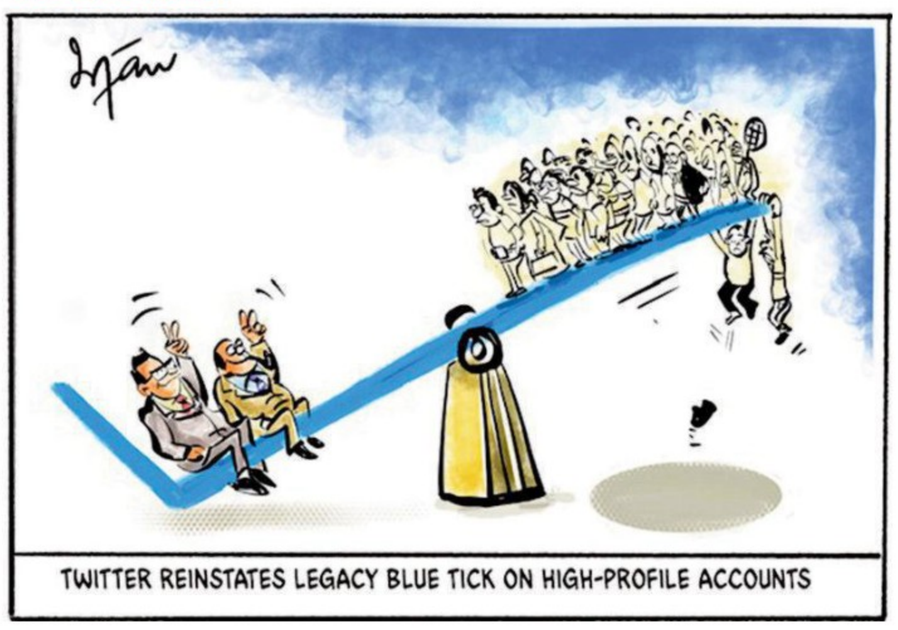
India has sent two heavy-lift aircraft to Saudi Arabia and a ship to the coast of Sudan, to begin evacuation of its citizens who are caught in the war-torn African nation, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Sunday. These moves are part of India's preparations to activate a contingency plan to evacuate people from Sudan once the situation improves.

"As part of our preparations, and in order to move swiftly, the Government of India is pursuing multiple options. Two Indian Air Force C-130J are currently positioned on standby in Jeddah. And *INS Sumedha* has reached Port Sudan," the MEA said.

It added the Indian Embassy in Sudan is in "regular touch" with Indian citizens across the country, and are advising them on the possibilities of "safe movement". It will coordinate with citizens regarding possible exit from Khartoum "as and when the situation permits safe movement", the MEA said.

ANOTHER REPORT
» WORLD PAGE

## *On the draw*




# Many celebrities get back the blue tick on their Twitter accounts

**Press Trust of India**
NEW DELHI

Twitter has restored verification badges on several high-profile celebrity accounts with millions of followers, just days after the microblogging platform culled the legacy blue checkmarks for non-paying users.

The move assumes significance as Indian celebrities and top politicians lost verified blue ticks on their Twitter accounts last week after the Elon Musk-led microblogging site started removing checkmark icons from accounts that did not pay a subscription fee.

The coveted blue ticks have now made a surprising comeback on the accounts of these celebrities. Top cricketers such as Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli have also got them back. It was not immediately clear whether or not these accounts have paid for the verification.

# Amritpal shifted to Assam on Union govt. orders, to be in solitary confinement

**Vijaita Singh**
NEW DELHI

The Punjab government has decided to shift pro-Khalistan propagator Amritpal Singh to a jail in Assam, more than 2,600 km from Punjab, on the directions of the Centre, a senior government official said on Sunday.

The decision was taken to avoid any kind of jailbreak or protests if Mr. Amritpal was lodged in any prison in Punjab or Haryana. The chief of Waris Punjab De has been detained under the National Security Act (NSA), and will be kept in solitary confinement in the Dibrugarh Central Prison in Assam. Nine other aides of Mr. Amritpal, who were arrested over the past 35 days, are also lodged in Dibrugarh jail and they are in separate cells, the official said.

The 1980 Act enables the administration to detain Mr. Amritpal for a year through executive orders that could be extended also. He is wanted in at least six other criminal cases and has been detained under the NSA as the Act has the provision to move the detainee from "one place of detention to another place, within the same State or another State, by order of the appropriate government." An official said that arresting him under any other criminal case would have required court's permission.

Amritpal Singh

"The possibility of a law and order situation in Punjab had Singh been kept in a jail in the State could not be ruled out. They could have incited other prisoners and could have planned a jailbreak," said the official.

The probability of Mr. Amritpal and his aides radicalising other prisoners in jail and associating them to a militant group, Anandpur Khalsa Fauj (AKF), raised by him, was also factored in while moving them out of the State.

"There are groups in Punjab funded by international separatist organisations who could have organised protests in his support outside the jail premises," said the official.

Another official said Mr. Amritpal had been hiding in Punjab and nearby areas. Though he had been on the radar of agencies since last year, on February 23, a violent mob, led by the self-styled Sikh preacher, stormed a police station in Punjab's Ajnala demanding one of their own to be released from police custody.

# Eye on polls, Gehlot targets gig workers with welfare law

**Sobhana K. Nair**
JAIPUR

With nearly six months left for the Assembly election, the Rajasthan government is working overtime to deliver the Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023, which has stringent provisions against errant aggregators, including barring them from operating in the State.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced his government's intention to bring the Bill, touted as the first such in India, in his Budget speech in February.

The draft Bill, a copy of which was accessed by *The Hindu*, envisages a Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers Welfare Board that will function like a mothership for over three lakh persons employed with various online service providers in the State. It will design welfare policies and hear grievances of the workers hired on a piece rate basis.

Mr. Gehlot had announced a ₹200-crore seed fund for the Board to begin its work. But importantly, the Bill gives powers to the Board to decide the quantum of cess that every aggregator will have to pay towards this social welfare corpus. This cess shall be a percentage of every transaction on the platform.

The Bill has provisions for a unique ID for workers that will be valid for three years. "All gig workers registered with any platform shall be automatically registered with the Board irrespective of the duration of their engagement with the platform. The Board shall generate a unique ID for every worker registered with one or more aggregators in the State," the Bill states.

A platform that flouts the provisions of the Bill, which includes integrating the data of the gig workers employed with the Board and sharing data of every transaction that takes place on their platform, can be fined up to ₹10 lakh for the first contravention and up to ₹1 crore for subsequent ones. The Bill also empowers the Board to recommend suspension of operations of the errant aggregator temporarily or permanently.

Ashok Gehlot

The draft Bill that is with the Law department currently will be put in public domain for feedback soon.

According to sources, so far, other than food delivery platform Swiggy, there have been no queries from any other aggregator. All are keenly watching the developments that could curtail their freedom of operation.

### Termed 'partners'

While there are several labour laws – both regulated by the Centre and State – they do not serve gig workers as most of the aggregators label them as 'partners', removing any employee-employer relationship, explains State Labour Department Secretary Vikas Bhale. "This mechanism works well for the aggregating platforms since it absolves them of practically any responsibility of providing social security and other benefits to the workers," he pointed out.

The draft welfare Bill, he said, was set to change this equation. Other States, especially neighbouring Madhya Pradesh, has expressed interest in the legislation.

With very little time left before the Model Code of Conduct kicks in for the elections, and with some resistance expected from aggregators, the State administration is working on a tight schedule.

The three lakh gig workers on average are in the age-group of 20-35 and politically the Congress government is hoping to cement its approval in this segment. However, the draft Bill currently does not offer anything tangible for the workers to look forward to.

# South African cheetah translocated to Kuno dies

**Press Trust of India**
BHOPAL/SHEOPUR

One of the cheetahs translocated to Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park (KNP) from South Africa died on Sunday, a senior forest official said. The cheetah, named Uday, was aged six.

This is the second such incident at the KNP in almost a month. One Namibian cheetah died of a kidney ailment on March 27.

The South African cheetah was found dull with head down in the morning and was taken out for treatment, but died in the evening, said Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Wildlife, J.S. Chauhan.

# Network of sensors to monitor groundwater quality

**Jacob P. Koshy**
NEW DELHI

The Jal Shakti Ministry is working on an ambitious plan to deploy a vast network of groundwater sensors that will continuously relay information on groundwater levels and the degree of contamination down to the taluk level. Currently, such information is only measured a handful of times a year and communicated via reports of the Central Groundwater Board.

Establishing a network that will continuously measure groundwater quality, feed it into a centralised network such as that of the National Water Informatics Centre and make it available for monitoring would make groundwater visible much the same way as air quality and meteorological variables – air pressure, moisture, precipitation – are now, Subodh Yadav, Joint Secretary, Department of Water Resources, told *The Hindu*. "We can potentially provide groundwater forecasts to farmers that would be useful for sowing, and updated advisories can influence groundwater extraction policies by States," he added. "Except for information on international treaties, most of this information will be accessible."

### 67,000 recordable units

The Central Groundwater Board currently relies on a network of about 26,000 groundwater observation wells that require technicians to manually measure the state of groundwater in a region. Under the new initiative, around 16,000 to 17,000 digital water level recorders will be connected to piezometers in the wells. Piezometers measure groundwater levels, the recorders will transmit the information digitally.

In the next three years, the CGWB aims to increase its network from ing 26,000 to 40,000. When combined with similar networks possessed by other institutions – State bodies, agriculture and meteorology departments – India will have 67,000 digitally recordable units to monitor groundwater dynamics.

The CGWB is in charge of the National Aquifer Mapping Programme (NAQUIM), that as of March has mapped the country's aquifers at a resolution of 1:50000 and under the second phase of the programme, expects to improve the resolution by five times. So far, an area of 25.15 lakh sq. km has been covered under the NAQUIM studies.

In the latest Ground Water Resource Assessment-2022, the total annual groundwater recharge in the country has been assessed as 437.60 billion cubic metres (BCM). The annual extractable groundwater resource has been assessed as 398.08 bcm, with actual extraction of 239.16 bcm.

The average stage of groundwater extraction for the country as a whole works out to be about 60.08%. Anything above 70% is considered "critical" though there are regions in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Rajasthan with groundwater blocks with over 100% extraction.

Reports over the years suggest that 85% of rural India uses groundwater for drinking and domestic purposes. In cities with a population of over 10 lakh, about 40% have seen water levels in monitored wells either stay stable or drop.

Groundwater contamination, the CGWB says, is mostly "geogenic" (natural) and hasn't significantly changed over the years. However, nitrate contamination – a result of the use of nitrogenous fertilizers – has been observed. Sections of nearly 409 districts have been confirmed with fluoride contamination and parts of 209 districts have noted arsenic contamination.

Those regions and States known to have groundwater contamination will be monitored more intensely for action by States, said Mr. Yadav.

# ‘We are clear about justice to all, appeasement of none’

BJP president denies accusations of running a polarising campaign in Karnataka, saying it is the minorities who have benefited the most from flagship welfare schemes of the Centre, and alleging that the Congress is seeking to polarise the campaign; he says a ‘double engine’ government is successful in last-mile delivery and the State can meet aspirations of people for development and infrastructure

INTERVIEW

**J.P. Nadda**

Nistula Hebbar

Bharatiya Janata Party president J.P. Nadda is confident that the party will come to power on its own in Karnataka, under the leadership of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai. The State has a high level of aspiration for development and a “double engine” government will serve its needs best, he says. On the role of former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa in the party, Mr. Nadda says he too shares the responsibility to keep the party in power. Excerpts:

**The BJP is the party in power in Karnataka; as such, what are the issues on which you feel you should be elected back in the State?**

We are talking of development by a “double engine” government, visible development especially in the realm of infrastructure – four-lane, six-lane highways and expressways, airports, redevelopment of railway stations. People have displayed an urge for development which has been delivered by Modi*ji* [Prime Minister Narendra Modi]. The double engine concept of governments working together is important in terms of last-mile delivery. In education, health, economy, start-up ecosystem, FDI, etc., Karnataka is at a point where the youth and other sections are looking at things with a high level of aspiration. The second part is empowerment, which is about last-mile delivery of welfare schemes of the Central and State government, increasing the representation of SC/STs in reservation, and there is a lot of appreciation in all these quarters.

**But you have also been accused of raising communally polarising issues such as a hijab ban in classrooms, the legacy of Tipu Sultan.**

We haven’t done anything on our own. When you raise issues, we have to answer.

For example, in this election, there is a debate on the Popular Front of India (PFI) and its activities. Who initiated it? Congress always polarises and we answer.

**But your State unit chief Nalin Kateel also said things like, “Don’t look at roads, highways, but at Hindu consciousness issues.”**

Everyone has their own way of putting things, but the fact remains that it is the Congress that seeks to polarise and we answer. We are clear about justice to all, appeasement of none. For example, if you look at the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana or Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana or Kisan Samman Nidhi, minorities have benefited the most. For the Sikh community too, Prime Minister Modi has done more than anyone else. This is being appreciated too, there is tremendous amount of love and respect for Prime Minister Modi.

**But removal of 4% reservation for Muslims in Karnataka sends a signal of not caring, which is contrary to Mr. Modi’s exhortation to the party to reach out to Pasmanda Muslims.**

Everyone knows the credibility of Prime Minister Modi, what he says he will do, so the outreach to Pasmanda Muslims is happening and will happen, but that doesn’t mean that the only vehicle for the outreach is through reservation. How is it good, in this context, not to follow the spirit of the Constitution, and just give a slogan of reservations and be unable to, under the law, provide that reservation in practice?

**The BJP removed former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, then rehabilitated him in the Parliamentary Board. Is there a realisation that it was a misstep?**

First of all, he [Mr. Yediyurappa] was not removed. Our party works in continuity and the elder generation always hands over the baton to the younger generation. Change is a continuous process, and it is a change of responsibility, not just of a post. Here, Mr. Yediyurappa has been given a new responsibility of being a member of the Parliamentary Board, and of the election committee, and his responsibility is also to see that the party wins the election. Chief Minister Bommai and Yediyurappa*ji* are campaigning together.

**But there seems to be a scramble for Lingayat votes, after the exit of Jagadish Shettar and Laxman Savadi in a huff, and that vote base looks shaky?**

We are very much sure that the Lingayats are with us. One thing you must remember is that in the history of our party, from the Jan Sangh days, whoever has left the party has not prospered on their own or in any other party. Also, tell me, will they be getting a better position than they had here? One was the Chief Minister [Mr. Shettar], another was a Deputy CM [Mr. Savadi] with at least five-and-a-half years left in his MLC term. When you leave the party, you also leave the ideology, and when you do that, how people perceive you is up to you to see.

**The Congress has demanded a caste census and a redistribution based on numbers. What is your view?**

First of all, Congress never has any issues, nothing to give to society, so they come up with issues which they think will get them some electoral benefit. We believe in *sabka saath, sabka vishwas* (with everyone, with the trust of all), and not in snatching someone’s right and giving it to someone else. Congress raising this issue is a sign that they have a poverty of a development agenda.

**The Congress has attacked you on corruption, and announced various income support and other schemes in their manifesto.**

First of all, the promises made by the Congress reflect frustration; they will promise anything to be elected. Please see what they promised in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh; have they delivered till now? They raised the slogan of “*garibi hatao* (end poverty)” for the past 50 years, but reducing abject poverty levels to less than 1% has been done by nine years of Narendra Modi’s government. The campaign on corruption was malicious as they were unable to prove anything. We, on the other hand, can list many such scams by the Congress in the State, like the Arkavati land scam, police recruitment scam, KPCL scam, teacher recruitment scam.

There is [former Minister] K.S. Eshwarappa’s case. An inquiry was held and now the case is closed, and when one of our own MLAs was caught in a graft case, whose government do you think was in power? People know very well who is corrupt, people have heard on the mic, one leader confessing that his party president takes 12% commission.

**The BJP is keen to expand in the southern States, with Mr. Modi personally invested in cultural exchanges such as the Kashi Tamil Sangamam. How is the party going to take on the entrenched Dravidian politics of Tamil Nadu?**

People have seen what they have received under Dravidian politics and the corruption of the DMK. People have also seen PM Modi’s affection and regard for Tamil culture, language and people. People are fed up of corruption, and only PM Modi has the strength to fight corruption, and the results of that will be seen in Tamil Nadu too.

**Will Mr. Bommai be Chief Minister if the BJP returns to power?**

We are fighting the poll under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Bommai. He is the Chief Minister and, as you can see, all our campaign material features him.

**There is talk that the BJP may tie up with the Janata Dal(S) if short on numbers.**

The BJP will come to power on its own in Karnataka. We won’t need anyone to form a government.

# Centre will clamp down on Ponzi apps, says FM

The government is working with the RBI and the IT Ministry on the regulation, says Nirmala Sitharaman, adding that investors should exercise caution before putting in hard-earned money

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that a global template on regulating cryptocurrency may be needed. @THINKERSFORUMS

Stating that the Centre will clamp down on Ponzi apps to protect investors’ hard-earned money, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said that discussions were on with the Information Technology Ministry and the Reserve Bank of India on the issue.

“There are apps coming out with promises and many of the apps are Ponzi apps. We are working with the RBI and the IT Ministry. We will be clamping down on such apps like never before so that we don’t get that Ponzi app taking away hard-earned money,” she said during an interaction organised here by the Thinkers Forum. She also said that a strong sense of caution is required before investing and investors should not go towards something based on others’ experience.

In response to a question on whether there was any proposal to regulate social media influencers and financial influencers on digital platforms, the Finance Minister said, “There is no proposal to regulate them at this moment. You do your due diligence.”

Answering a query on cryptocurrency, Ms. Sitharaman said, “Global understanding is required and a global template may have to be created. All of us will have to work together. Otherwise regulating crypto may not be effective. But that does mean we are controlling the technology. It has its goodness, it has potential and has its own strengths. We keep that in mind.”

She said that the Financial Stability Board, set up by the G-20, had agreed to give a report on crypto while the International Monetary Fund has already come up with a paper on crypto. “It was India’s proposal and G-20 has kept it on its agenda. The FSB report and the IMF report are going to be discussed in July again when G-20 Finance Ministers and central bank Governors meet,” she said.

“The very character of crypto being technology-driven requires that all countries are on board. It will be not be effective otherwise. No one country individually in the matter of technology-driven crypto assets can effectively control it,” she added.

The Finance Minister also said that it was due to stability in policy, trust in the government and Indian currency that many countries were willing to trade with India in rupees.

## ‘Allegation of Amul entry to kill Nandini is brazen’

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Terming the allegation that dairy behemoth Amul was brought to Karnataka to kill Nandini “brazen”, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said that the Amul vs Karnataka Cooperative Milk Producers Federation narrative was being pushed as an emotional issue for poll propaganda.

“Amul entered Karnataka when the Congress was ruling. I am not sure if I should name the Chief Minister at that time. The same respected former Chief Minister is questioning the entry of Amul. Strictly speaking, it was tweaked, twisted and made an emotional issue because it is election time,” she said during an interaction organised here by Thinkers Forum on Sunday.

“Instead of building a healthy competition and positive narrative, it has been twisted,” she added.

# Amid global volatility, Goyal declines to set exports target for current year

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

The Union government has pressed pause on setting any exports target for the financial year 2023-24 considering the volatility and weakness in the global economy, which has been ravaged by the impact of the Russian war and high inflation, impacting discretionary spending.

Amid the uncertainties, the government has decided to evaluate the situation on the ground and take a pragmatic view.

Piyush Goyal, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Textiles, on Sunday declined to announce any exports target for the current year.

Piyush Goyal

“It will not be proper to give FY24 exports target now and we do not want to give any absurd number. Due to the ongoing war, the economies of several countries have become weak and discretionary spending has come down,” the Minister said.

“So in the next five months, we will be taking delegations of different export sectors to several countries to understand the situation on the ground and then to set our exports target. We will be organising buyer-seller meets and exhibitions to push our exports.”

In FY23, despite the adverse conditions, India had clocked record merchandise and service exports of $770 billion. In the previous two years, exports were to the tune of $676 billion and $500 billion respectively, the Minister said.

Mr. Goyal was speaking at an exports awards function organised by the Gem and Jewellery Exports Promotion Council in Mumbai. He said the free trade agreements with the UAE and Australia had immensely helped the exporters and the forthcoming ones would also increase the exports volume.

# Assam Police issue notice to president of Youth Congress

Press Trust of India
GUWAHATI

The Assam Police on Sunday asked Youth Congress president Srinivas B.V. to appear before it by May 2 for questioning in connection with allegations of harassment and gender discrimination made against him by now-expelled party leader Angkita Dutta.

A police team from Assam issued notice to Mr. Srinivas at his Bengaluru residence, with the order stating that failing to comply with it could lead to his arrest.

“A five-member team of the Guwahati Police are in Bengaluru. The notice was pasted on the door of his residence as he was not present,” Joint Commissioner of Police Prateek Thube said.

The notice said that “reasonable grounds” had been revealed to question Mr. Srinivas in the case and that he would have to present himself on May 2.

**TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED**
**e- Procurement TENDER NOTICE**
Bids are invited for the Spec. No. e-EHVT-17/2023 for Construction of 400/220KV GIS and connected transmission network at Atchutapuram SEZ in Visakhapatnam District by making LILO of both Circuits of 400KV Khammam-Kalapaka and Kalapaka-Asupaka TMDC Line and connected 220KV downstream network on LS basis. Tenders will be available in **https://www.apeprocurement.gov.in** from 24-04-2023 at 17:00 Hrs. Ph. No.0866-2429232, Extn. : 2057/2083.
DIPR 2030PP/CL, Dt.21-04-2023 **Sd/- Chief Engineer/Projects/VS/Vijayawada**

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| Sl. No. | Description | Qty. | Gem Bid no. | Closing date and time for receipt of tenders |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Hiring of services of 2 persons of Core Network Engineers and 1 Person of System Administrator. | 2 Years | GEM/2023/B/3259796 | 26-05-2023 At 10:45 AM(IST) |
| 2. | Hiring of services for Digital Authentication with Track & Trace of Adhesive Labels for Punjab Agricultural Department. | 1 AU | (Development Tender) GEM/2023/B/3332757 | 26-05-2023 At 10:45 AM(IST) |

For further details, please visit our website at http://spphyderabad.spmcil.com & amendment/ corrigendum if any, will be published on website only.
Sd/-
MANAGER & HEAD MATERIALS For Chief General Manager

# India and China hold 18th Corps Commander talks at Moldo

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Just ahead of the Shangai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting in the national capital, India and China on Sunday held the 18th round of Corps Commander talks at Moldo on the Chinese side in eastern Ladakh in the continuing efforts to resolve the standoff ongoing since May 2020. Defence sources confirmed that talks began on Sunday morning at Moldo. The focus remains on disengagement from Demchok and Depsang Plains.

The Indian side at the talks was led by Lieutenant General Rashim Bali, who recently took over as the Leh-based 14 Corps Commander.

भारत सरकार - अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA - DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह, एसडीएससी-शार / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR
श्रीहरिकोटा, आं.प्र. / SRIHARIKOTA - 524124
**संक्षिप्त ई–निविदा सूचना / Brief E-TENDER NOTICE**
सं.शार:सीएमजी सिविल:अनुरक्षण:ई–जन निविदा / No:SHAR:CMGCIVIL:MAINT:E-PT-01/23-24 तिथि/Date. 20.04.2023
भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से **"फेज–1 एवं 2 के क्वाटरों में लकड़ी की ज्वाइनरीज"** (टी/सी-23-001, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 21.14 लाख), **"एसएमपीसी इकाई–1 में विविध सिविल कार्य"** (टी/सी-23-002, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 47.16 लाख), **"एसएमपीसी इकाई–1 के भवन सं. 140, 139, 122 & 128 में विविध सिविल कार्य"** (टी/सी-23-003, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 19.42 लाख) **"एफएलपी, एसएसपीएफ में राजमिस्त्री का कार्य"** (टी/सी-23-004, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 10.75 लाख), हेतु मद दर ई–निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा दस्तावेजों को **08.05.2023** को **14:30** बजे तक डाउनलोड किया जा सकता हैं। इच्छुक निविदाकार विस्तृत सूचना के लिए हमारी वेबसाइट www.isro.gov.in या www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO देखें।
On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for **"Wooden joineries @ PHC-I & II Quarters"** (T/C-23-001, Est. cost ₹ 21.14 Lakhs); **"Misc. Civil works @ SMPC Unit-1"** (T/C-23-002, Est. cost ₹ 47.16 Lakhs); **"Misc. Civil works @ bldg. 140, 139, 122 & 128 @ SMPC Unit-1"** (T/C-23-003, Est. cost ₹ 19.42 Lakhs); **"Masonry works @ SSPF, FLP"** (T/C-23-004, Est. cost ₹ 10.75 Lakhs). Tender documents can be downloaded up to **08.05.2023**, **14:30** hrs. Interested tenderers may visit www.isro.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for details.
हस्ताक्षरित- समूह प्रधान, सीएमजी / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG / SDSC SHAR

**SALEM CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**
2022-2023 - 15th CENTRAL FINANCE COMMISSION (Tied Grant)
E-Tender Notice
Roc.No. E4/9094/2022 Notice for Inviting Tender (NIT) Date: 20.04.2023
1. Tender are Invited for eligible bidders for 48 Packages of woks in Salem City Municipal Corporation. under **15th CFC for the year 2022-2023 Un tied grant.**
2. The Minimum value of single package is **Rs.5.00 Lakhs** and the Maximum value of **99.00 Lakhs.**
3. The details of the tender shall be obtained from web portal: **www.tn.tenders.gov.in**
4. The tender document shall be downloaded from **24.04.2023** to **10.05.2023** from the web portal: **www.tn.tenders.gov.in**
5. The Last date for downloading the tender document and the last date for uploading / submission of filled up tender document in upto **3.00 pm.** on **09.05.2023.**
6. The received tenders will be opened at **3.30 pm** on **10.05.2023** at the office of Salem City Municipal Corporation.
7. The value of each work and the details of Earnest money Deposit and the eligibility of bidder are given in the concern work / tender notice.
8. Bid document and other information available at (free of cost) **https://tntenders.gov.in** "e submission" is also permitted.
Date, time and Venue for Tender Procedures.
**Submission of bids - 24.04.2023 upto 10.05.2023 - 3.00 P.M.**
**Opening of bids - 10.05.2023 at 3.30 P.M**
DIPR/2253/Tender/2023 **Commissioner, Salem Corporation.**
"சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம், சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்."

## The dwindling fortunes of the Left parties

The last Left party MLA in Karnataka was G.V. Sriram Reddy, who won the 2004 Assembly election from the Bagepalli constituency in Kolar district. He had contested the elections eight times from 1985 to 2018, but won only twice, in 1994 and 2004. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is fielding Anil Kumar Avulappa, a general surgeon who came to prominence for his social work during the pandemic, from Bagepalli this time.

The influence of the Left has dwindled in Karnataka over the years, but there was a time when well-known trade unionists made it to the Assembly. Some of them include M.S. Krishnan (from Rajajinagar and Malleswaram), Pampapathi (Davangere), B.V. Kakkilaya (Bantwal and Vitla), and Suryanarayan Rao (Varthur).

G.V. Sriram Reddy

### NOTA share

In the 2018 Assembly election, six out of the top 10 constituencies with the highest vote share for NOTA were in the Bangalore region. In 2018, a State-wide survey to understand voter awareness across Karnataka also found that 55% of the people were not aware of the option on EVMs

| No. | Constituency | District | Vote % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Bangalore South | Bangalore | 4.78 |
| 2 | Malleswaram | Bangalore | 1.74 |
| 3 | BTM Layout | Bangalore | 1.74 |
| 4 | C.V. Raman Nagar | Bangalore | 1.71 |
| 5 | Gandhi Nagar | Bangalore | 1.64 |
| 6 | Rajaji Nagar | Bangalore | 1.61 |
| 7 | Gurmitkal | Yadgir | 1.59 |
| 8 | Ron | Gadag | 1.57 |
| 9 | Shivajinagar | Bangalore | 1.52 |
| 10 | Maski | Raichur | 1.5 |

Source: "Political Career Tracker for Candidates in Indian National and State Assembly Elections", Trivedi Centre for Political Data, Ashoka University

**No choice:** The NOTA option on an EVM used for a demonstration. PTI

## CMs who have seen through their terms

In the history of the Karnataka Assembly, D. Devaraj Urs (1972-1977) and Siddaramaiah (2013-2018) are the only Chief Ministers to have completed a full five-year term. Though S. Nijalingappa held the position for more than seven years (1956–1958 and 1962–1968), it was not from start to finish of a full tenure.

BJP leaders including Prime Minister Narendra Modi are acting against the very ideology of Lord Basaveshwara

**RAHUL GANDHI**
Congress leader

# Small but packing a punch: why established players keep a wary eye on vote splitters

While the AAP will look to continue its recent good run over the Congress, parties such as the SDPI and AIMIM may eat into minority votes; newly floated parties such as the KRPP and KRS and the BSP and Left parties hope to make inroads

NEWS ANALYSIS

**K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj**
BENGALURU

While politics in Karnataka has largely remained triangular, several political parties, the most prominent among them in recent times being the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), are trying to gain a toehold.

In a State where the Congress is already finding it difficult to convert its vote share into seats, the party fears that most of the smaller parties will split its votes. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Janata Dal(S) seem less worried about the smaller parties.

Though the AAP has failed to make any impact in the State (the party contested 28 seats and managed to secure only 0.55% of the votes in 2018), this time, fresh from the Punjab victory and a good show in Gujarat, it has 213 candidates in the fray.

"Being branded an urban party, we are expected to do well in Bengaluru, but the AAP has found more resonance in pockets of north Karnataka's hinterland, where there is a dearth of alternatives, and [the region] faces a serious governance deficit," Pruthvi Reddy, Karnataka convener of the party, said.

With the AAP having eaten into the vote share of the Congress in Delhi, Punjab and Gujarat, it is expected to follow a similar pattern in Karnataka. However, the party hopes to become the third wheel in north Karnataka, a position the JD(S) lost gradually. "Our surveys suggest we have a good chance in several constituencies, including Rona, Sagar, Bidar South and Bagepalli," an AAP leader said.

However, the party suffered a few setbacks in the run-up to the election, and suffers from the lack of a "recognisable face" in the State.

### Splitting votes

The table lists the number of seats smaller parties are contesting in the 2023 election, the number of seats contested in 2018 and the vote share secured. Smaller parties are expected to splinter Congress's vote share in the upcoming election

| Party | No. of seats contesting in 2023 | No. of seats contested in 2018 | % of votes in seats they contested |
|---|---|---|---|
| Aam Aadmi Party | 213 | 28 | 0.55 |
| Karnataka Rashtra Samiti | 200 | - | - |
| Bahujan Samaj Party | 137 | 18 | 3.72 |
| Kalyana Rajya Karnataka Paksha | 49 | - | - |
| Social Democratic Party of India | 16 | 3 | 10.5 |
| All India Majlees-e- Ittehadul Muslimeen | 2 | - | - |
| CPI(M) | 4 | 19 | 2.5 |
| CPI | 7 | 2 | 1.47 |
| SUCI - C | 14 | 5 | 0.46 |
| Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti | 4 | 4 | Contested as Independents |

> With Congress being the frontrunner, we hope the electorate is not swayed by smaller parties, who stand no chance at governance
>
> **KRISHNA BYRE GOWDA**
> Congress leader

**Baron's new party**

The new party in the upcoming election is the Kalyana Rajya Pragathi Paksha (KRPP), founded by mining baron and former BJP Minister G. Janardhan Reddy. It has put up candidates in 49 constituencies, predominantly in the Kalyana Karnataka region, a traditional stronghold of the Congress.

Mr. Reddy, who played a key role in helping the BJP sweep the region in the 2008 election, has claimed he will mop up both BJP and Congress votes. But a senior Congress leader claimed that he was no more than the "BJP's Trojan horse." With his politically more popular friend B. Sriramulu and his two MLA brothers remaining in the BJP, Mr. Reddy's influence will be limited, politicians from the region predict.

The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), which was in an alliance with the JD(S) in 2018, won a lone seat from Kollegal. But its candidate, N. Mahesh, later switched to the BJP. This time, the BSP has decided to go it alone and is contesting 137 seats.

"Our alliance with the JD(S) helped them more than us," a prominent leader of the party said.

The Karnataka Rashtra Samithi (KRS), a new party floated by Ravi Krishna Reddy, whose earlier forays into electoral politics as an Independent candidate failed repeatedly, has put up candidates in 200 constituencies. The party is pitching an anti-corruption plank.

**The Muslim vote**

With the BJP running a campaign targeting Muslims in 2022, an important question is how parties such as the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) and the All India Majlees-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) will fare.

The AIMIM tried hard to secure an alliance with the JD(S) but failed, and has ended up contesting only two seats. However, the Congress fears that the AIMIM, with limited influence in pockets of north Karnataka, may work for the JD(S).

The SDPI, coming on the back of a Popular Front of India (PFI) ban and winning more than 300 seats in the 2020 gram panchayat elections, is contesting in 16 constituencies. In the previous Assembly election, it contested in three constituencies, lost the deposit in two, but ended up putting up a fight in the Narasimharaja constituency in Mysuru against Tanveer Sait of the the Congress.

This time around, the SDPI and the BSP have an informal tie-up, as part of which the BSP is not contesting in Narasimharaja and as a return of favour, the SDPI, despite having six councillors, will not contest in Chamarajanagar. The Congress is jittery about how this will pan out.

**The Left parties**

The Left parties – the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), the Communist Party of India (CPI), and the Socialist Unity Centre of India (SUCI) – are contesting in 24 constituencies with no alliance between them. Of them, the CPI(M) is hopeful of a victory in its one-time pocketborough of Bagepalli.

The Maharashtra Ekikaran Samithi, which has failed to win a seat since 2013, is contesting four seats in Belagavi, where it may have an impact. In the 2021 Lok Sabha byelection, the party's candidate stood third, polling 1.24 lakh votes.

**For stability**

Given that the State has had only one stable government completing a full term since 2004 – between 2013 and 2018 led by Siddaramaiah of the Congress – the Congress hopes that people will vote for "stability".

"With the Congress being the frontrunner, we hope the electorate is not swayed by smaller parties, which stand no chance at governance," senior Congress leader Krishna Byre Gowda said.

## *Putting the best foot forward*

Artistes perform at the inauguration of the BJP's cultural campaign for the Assembly election, at the party's State office, Jagannath Bhavan, at Malleswaram in Bengaluru on Sunday. MURALI KUMAR K.

# Murals in the making: ethnic themes 'sweep' across walls of 2,500 polling booths

**Suchith Kidiyoor**
BENGALURU

For art teachers in Karnataka government schools, a new high-visibility canvas has emerged over the past month: the walls of classrooms-turned-polling booths. Thousands of voters in the upcoming election will queue past the impromptu art galleries, as part of an initiative to showcase local traditions and culture during the polls.

The Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Committee has taken up measures to establish close to 2,500 theme-based polling stations across the State. Around 40 "ethnic polling stations" will be established in six districts, that will highlight the life of tribal communities in their regions.

**Showcasing culture**

"It has been a month since government art teachers got busy painting the walls of the schools that are designated as polling stations," said P.S. Vastrad, the State's nodal officer for SVEEP. "In coastal districts, some of the identified polling stations will showcase Yakshagana, Kambala and so on. Polling booths of Mysuru district will display the Mysuru Palace and Mysuru Mallige that has GI tag," he added.

P.S. Vastrad, the Nodal Officer for SVEEP, interacting with polling staff at a polling station in N.V. College in Kalaburagi. ARUN KULKARNI

The official added that around 1,120 polling stations in the State will be managed by women. Each constituency will have one polling station which will be managed by young officials who have recently joined government service and another one with only physically challenged staff on election duty.

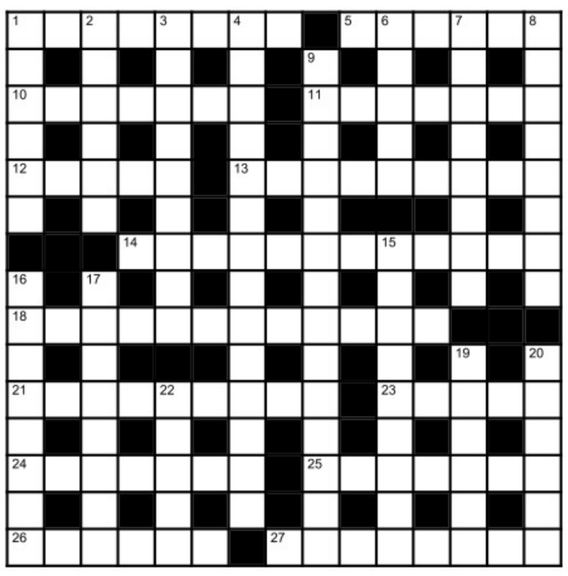
The committee has also taken steps to improve voter turnout. BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath told *The Hindu* that, in Bengaluru, the administration is aiming to achieve a voting turnout of at least 75% this time around. "There is urban apathy about voting. For convenience, all the information about EPIC cards, polling stations and other details are made available in the voter helpline app. We are also distributing voter slips at the doorsteps 10 days before the elections."

## TH CROSSWORD + 13847

(set by Dr. X)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



**Across**

**1** Court battle covered by extremely dedicated investigative journalist (8)
**5** One crawling in small jetty over delta (6)
**10** Country liquor knocked back by English character in retreat (7)
**11** Paper about act backing end of early norm of marrying outside a community (7)
**12** Midday meal in bundle left for boy (5)
**13** Fine novel with story that's indescribable (9)
**14** Catch rebellious lag going berserk, rioting and looting (12)
**18** Penniless and old with nobody getting evening meals (2,4,6)
**21** Employed a terrific craftsman (9)
**23** Chief wants money plant (5)
**24** Adjusts fan in store (7)
**25** Opening erotic novel? Wasting time without doubt (7)
**26** Time to invite retired old director in room for discussion (6)
**27** Recovers in secrecy perhaps to conceal bit of liposuction (8)

**Down**

**1** Manipulate and sway woman for date (6)
**2** Men reviewed problem in devices (6)
**3** Fight with man about ordinary service in store (9)
**4** Remarkable hit, like show with lions might be? (7,7)
**6** Univ. teacher drinking alcohol heartily is tight (5)
**7** Liqueur from island in Bermuda perhaps (8)
**8** Streak on stretch outside one hotel in Essex town (8)
**9** Blue pen, regular present that's broadly useful (7-7)
**15** New airline, extremely trendy actually (2,7)
**16** Advance to pick up associate turning drunk and insensible (8)
**17** Plot change in vector (8)
**19** Beginning to argue with wife interrupting work freely (2,4)
**20** Dresses up prince with rising disdain (6)
**22** Showoff in erotic clothes, more sheer (5)

## SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 9 | | 8 | |
| | 1 | | 8 | | | | 4 | |
| 8 | | | 4 | | | | | 1 |
| | | | | | 1 | 6 | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | 3 |
| | | 2 | 3 | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | 2 | | | 4 |
| | 8 | | | | 3 | | 9 | |
| | 5 | | 6 | 9 | 8 | | 7 | |

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

No.SS5778 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

**Solution to previous puzzle**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | C | R | A | P | E | B | Y | |
| O | | A | | O | | R | | O |
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| D | | A | | T | | A | | T |
| E | A | G | E | R | | D | R | O |
| N | | E | | A | | A | | F |
| | | | T | Y | I | N | G | T |
| D | | A | | A | | D | | H |
| I | N | S | A | L | U | B | R | I |
| M | | P | | | | U | | S |
| I | R | I | S | H | S | T | E | W |
| N | | R | | A | | T | | O |
| I | B | I | R | I | T | E | | R |
| S | | N | | T | | R | | L |
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| | | | | | | | | |
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| P | H | A | S | I | C | | | |
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| E | | | | E | | C | | |
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| U | S | | | | | | | |
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| A | C | C | R | A | | | | |
| T | | A | | U | | | | |
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**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| 7 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 9 |
| 9 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| 6 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 7 |
| 2 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 6 |
| 5 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 1 |

## FAITH

### Glories of Lord Varadaraja

Vedanta Desika, in his Mei Viratha Manmiyam, describes the scene in Sri Vaikuntha and the glories of Lord Varadaraja of Kanchi, said T.N. Aravamudachariar in a discourse. In Sri Vaikuntha, Lord Narayana is with His Consorts – Sri Devi, Bhoomi Devi and Neela Devi. He is resplendent with the six qualities of jnana, sakti, bala, aiswarya, veerya and tejas. The Nityasuris are happy in His company. The One praised by the Vedas reclines on the serpent Adi Sesha. He is the One who protects this world. This Supreme One is the One who is in Hastigiri, says Brahma. Brahma says that his sins have been destroyed because of this.

None can describe the beauty of the Lord, not even the thousand-tongued serpent Adi Sesha. Desika with all humility, therefore, presents his description of Lord Varadaraja as that of Brahma. Lord Varadaraja appeared with His Consorts Sri Devi and Bhooma Devi for the sake of those who had bhakti towards Him. He reminds one of a male swan with two female birds with it. He looks like a mountain with rivers flowing down it. He looks like the Sun, who again has two companions – brilliance and shadow. He is like a tree with two creepers clinging to it. He is like the subtle dharma, which has a connection to both srutis and smritis. His patience matches that of the earth, which holds no grudge against those who dig the ground and hurt her. One can give such examples to show the greatness of His qualities. But such comparisons do not do justice to His immeasurable qualities. The conclusion is that His auspicious qualities are beyond count and beyond comparison. There is none equal or superior to Him.

IOWA

## Trump defends push to restrict abortion rights after rebuke

AP

Donald Trump, stinging from a rebuke by one of U.S.'s leading anti-abortion groups, used a speech before evangelicals in Iowa to spotlight his actions as U.S. President to try to restrict abortion rights. Chief among the ones cited by him were his nominations of three conservative judges to the U.S. Supreme Court. AP

NAGORNO-KARABAKH

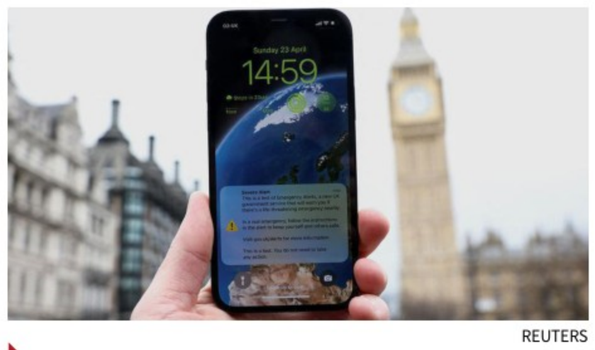
## Azerbaijan sets up first checkpoint on key route to arch-rival Armenia

AFP

Azerbaijan on Sunday set up a checkpoint on the only land link between Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, sparking an angry response from its arch-rival Yerevan. The move fuels tensions between the ex-Soviet Caucasus nations that fought two wars over Azerbaijan's Armenian-majority region of Nagorno-Karabakh. AFP

LONDON

## U.K. tests new emergency alert system on millions of phones




REUTERS

The U.K. conducted its first test of a new emergency alert service on Sunday, with millions of mobile phones emitting a loud alarm and vibrating. The system, modelled on similar schemes in Canada, Japan and the U.S., aims to warn the public if there is a danger to life nearby but generated criticism over "nanny state" intrusion. AFP

LONDON

## Labour Party in U.K. suspends its prominent MP over racism remark

REUTERS

The U.K.'s Opposition Labour Party suspended prominent member Diane Abbott as an MP on Sunday, pending an investigation into comments she made that Jewish people were not subject to racism "all their lives". Ms. Abbott later tweeted that she wanted to "wholly and unreservedly withdraw my remarks". AFP

## Russia irked after U.S. denies visas to journalists

**Agence France-Presse**
MOSCOW

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Sunday said Moscow "will not forgive" Washington for denying U.S. visas to Russian journalists meant to accompany him on a visit to UN headquarters.

"We will not forgive this," said Mr. Lavrov, who will chair several UN Security Council meetings in New York. Russia took up the presidency of the UN Security Council in April despite the Ukraine offensive.

Last month, U.S. journalist Evan Gershkovich was arrested in Russia on claims of espionage. The U.S. journalist, his publication and officials strongly denied the allegations.

# Nations scramble to evacuate citizens as Sudan battles rage

The U.S. and the U.K rescue embassy staff and their family members while France and Germany confirm the initiation of evacuation process of European citizens and other nationals as well

**Agence France-Presse**
KHARTOUM

U.S. and British forces on Sunday evacuated embassy staff and their families from battle-torn Sudan where deadly fighting raged into a second week between forces loyal to two rival Generals.

As gunfire again echoed through Khartoum and fighter jets roared above, foreigners also fled the capital in a long UN car convoy, as millions of frightened residents hunkered down inside their homes, many running low on water and food.

Across the city of five million, Army and militia troops have fought ferocious street battles since April 15, leaving behind charred tanks, gutted buildings and shops that have been looted and torched.

More than 420 people have been killed and thousands wounded, according to UN figures.

U.S. special forces launched a rescue mission early on Sunday for around 100 embassy staff and their relatives, swooping in with helicopters to fly them to a military base in Djibouti.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak later said U.K. forces had also "completed a complex and rapid evacuation of British diplomats and their families from Sudan".

**Long road:** A convoy leaving Khartoum advances on a road to Port Sudan on Sunday as people flee the war-torn capital of Sudan. AFP

### UN convoy

Long convoys of UN vehicles and buses were seen leaving Khartoum heading east to Port Sudan on the Red Sea, 850 kilometres by road.

Both France and Germany said on Sunday they had begun evacuation operations that would assist European citizens and other nationals as well.

# Chinese envoy's comments miff Europe and Ukraine

**Agence France-Presse**
PARIS

**Lu Shaye had said that countries which emerged after the fall of the Soviet Union do not have effective status under international law**

China's Ambassador to France has sparked anger in eastern Europe and Ukraine while drawing a rebuke in Paris after questioning the sovereignty of post-Soviet countries.

Speaking on Friday on the LCI news channel, Ambassador Lu Shaye suggested countries that emerged after the fall of the Soviet Union "don't have effective status under international law because there is not an international agreement confirming their status as sovereign nations".

The comments cast doubt not just on Ukraine, which Russia invaded last February, but all former Soviet republics which emerged as independent nations after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, including members of the European Union.

Ukrainian presidential aide Mykhaylo Podolyak said on Sunday that the status of post-Soviet countries was "enshrined in international law", while he also took issue with Mr. Lu's comments on Crimea which was occupied by Russia in 2014.

Asked during his interview if Crimea was Ukrainian, Mr. Lu replied, "It depends on how you look at the problem. There's history. Crimea was Russian at the start."

"It is strange to hear an absurd version of the 'history of Crimea' from a representative of a country that is scrupulous about its thousand-year history," Mr. Podolyak said, referring to China.

The Foreign Ministers of Baltic countries Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, all former Soviet republics which joined the EU after Independence, condemned the comments from Mr. Lu, who is part if a new class of outspoken Chinese diplomats.

Latvia's Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkevics wrote on Twitter that his views were "completely unacceptable", while Estonia's Margus Tsahkna called them "false and a misinterpretation of history."

# Tamil parties flag escalating attacks on temples in northern Sri Lanka

**Meera Srinivasan**
COLOMBO

The Tamils in Sri Lanka have witnessed an escalation in the attack on Hindu temples in recent weeks, a trend that they say is part of the State's "ongoing Sinhalisation project" in the island's north.

In recent weeks, the Tamil media reported multiple incidents of vandalism at temples, where Hindu deities were found missing or damaged. In Jaffna, some Tamils have sought to counter the trend by placing a Hindu deity in a public space, prompting the police to petition the court seeking its removal. Several Tamil political parties have called for a protest on April 25 against the recent temple attacks, among other issues.

Simultaneously, the Tamils also point to an increase in the number of new Buddhist structures and shrines coming up in the Northern Province, where Hindus form the largest religious group, followed by Christians and Muslims, with Buddhists in the fourth place.

The developments have come amid an increased activity by Sri Lanka's Department of Archaeology in the Tamil-majority north and east. Authorities have restricted public access to some temples, citing ongoing "archaeological research" in the historic sites. In one instance, media reported the arrest of a youth who attempted to worship at a temple in Vedukkunarimalai, Vavuniya. A large protest was held in the area last month against the vandalism of idols at this temple.

**Faith matters:** A protest held in Sri Lanka's Vavuniya last month against the vandalism on temple idols. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

### Persistent assault

Jaffna MP and Tamil National People's Front Leader Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam sees the incidents as part of a persistent assault on Tamils' rights, including to worship. Ever since the end of the war, successive governments have "accelerated the Sinhalisation" of the north and the east, he said.

"The Rajapaksas spearheaded this [Sinhalisation] project, but that doesn't mean the attitude of [President] Ranil Wickremesinghe or [Leader of Opposition] Sajith Premadasa is any different," he told *The Hindu*.

Recalling the manifesto of Mr. Wickremesinghe's United National Party, ahead of the 2018 local government elections, the MP said: "It stated that their government will rebuild 1,000 Buddhist viharas [temples], a vast majority of them claimed to be in the north and east. Mr. Sajith was the Minister in charge of this project." Mr. Ponnambalam said Tamils have been struggling against "this genocidal agenda", of "erasing the Tamil identity" of the north and the east. "It is utter desperation that led [Tamils] to take up arms. Now that the Tamil armed struggle has been crushed, we are back to business as usual."

### Clear pattern

M.A. Sumanthiran, Jaffna legislator for the Tamil National Alliance and a senior lawyer, is appearing for Hindu religious groups in multiple legal battles where temple land, or access, is being contested by authorities. There is "very clearly, a pattern and an agenda" seen in the escalating instances of attacks and vandalism on Hindu temple deities across the north, he noted.

Observing that the Sri Lankan Constitution guarantees every citizen the right to worship, or to not worship, he said: "This Sinhalisation project cannot be countered by placing more statues or deities. We need sober ways of putting an end to this practice. It needs regulation of the erection of new statues, across religions. Meanwhile, a citizen's right to worship, which is an absolute right, ought not to be interfered with, irrespective of which religion one follows," he said.

# Signs of Kyiv's spring counteroffensive emerge

**Associated Press**
KYIV

Ukrainian military forces have successfully established positions on the eastern side of the Dnieper river, according to a new analysis, giving rise to speculation on Sunday that the advances could be an early sign of Kyiv's long-awaited spring counteroffensive.

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, reported that geolocated footage from pro-Kremlin military bloggers indicated that Ukrainian troops had established a foothold near the town of Oleshky, along with "stable supply lines" to their positions.

Natalia Humeniuk, the spokeswoman for Ukraine's Operational Command South, while neither confirming nor denying the ISW report, said only that details of military operations in the Dnieper delta couldn't be disclosed for operational and security reasons.

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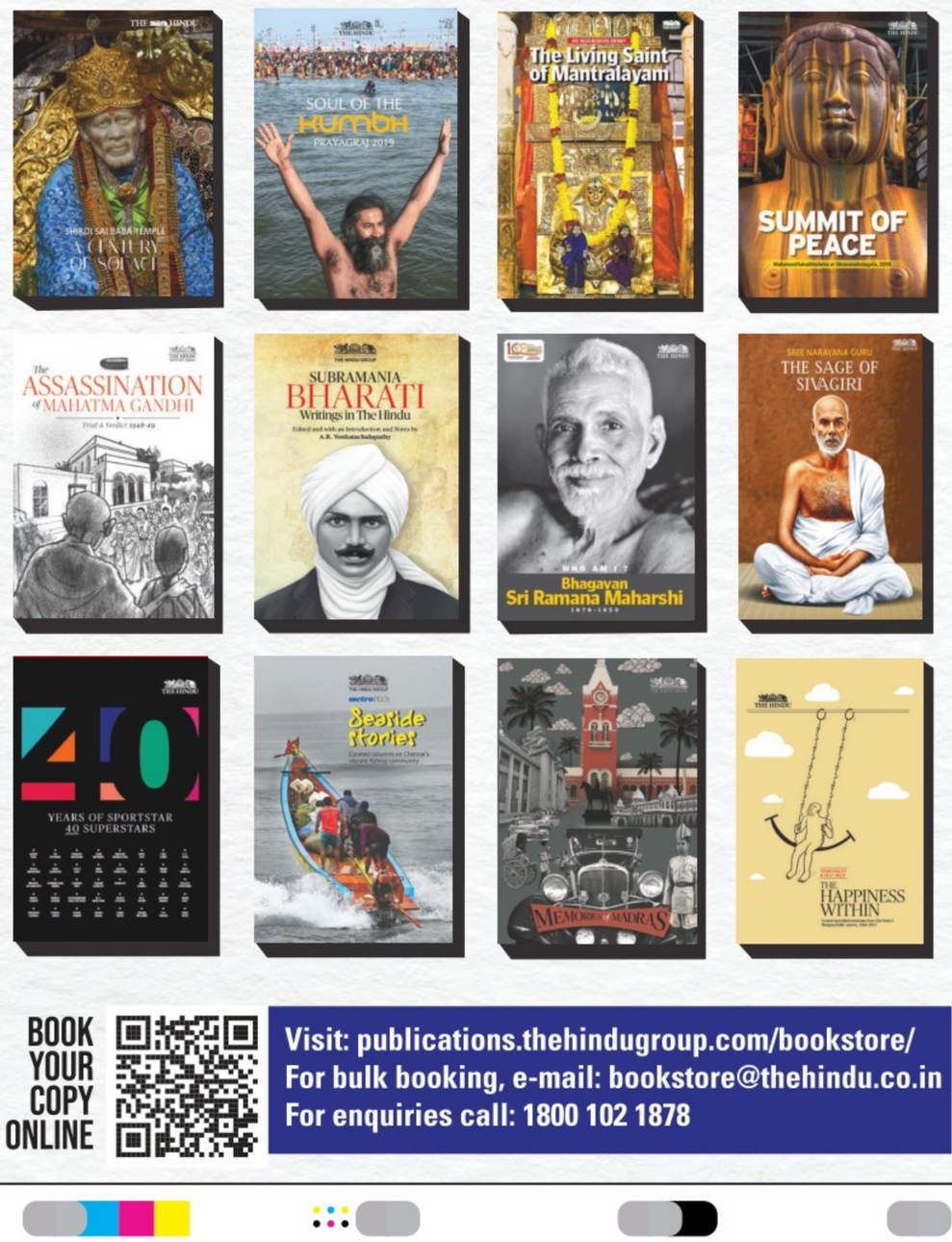


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## ASKUS

**Bhavana Acharya**

**Q** I am 23 with a salary of ₹25,000. I took a PLI policy from India Post worth ₹15 lakh (₹3,000 p.m.) and have about ₹12,000 in gold ornaments. I save ₹2,000 per month. How can I save more money?
MUTHURAMAN S

**A** Investing smaller sums over a longer period is better than putting off investing waiting for larger savings to accumulate. Gold as a long-term investment is useful, but avoid investing a big part of savings. At best, let gold account for about 15% of the total investment. More importantly, gold ornaments are not efficient ways to invest in gold; one, it is hard to sell it in return for cash as most jewellers are willing to only exchange for new jewellery. Two, due to making charges and other wastage, you do not realise the real market price of gold. Three, there is also the cost of storage. Instead, for further investments in gold consider Sovereign Gold Bonds or gold ETFs/ mutual funds. You can start investing the savings you have each month in a simple fixed deposit (you can go for a recurring deposit). At this time, along with attractive FD interest rates, your tax status will be low and the safety of FDs will help you build a good basis for your investments. As income and savings grow, you can begin to invest in higher-returning products such as a Nifty 50 equity index fund.

---

**Q** I am 23 and work for Central Government. I earn ₹30,000 a month. I have two SIPs of ₹250. In few years, there may be high-ticket expenses such as my brother's wedding, buying a bike, and so on. After expenses, I can save about ₹2,000 a month. Should I invest that too?
CHAYAN HALDER

**A** The good thing is to start investing regardless of amount. If you can save the additional ₹2,000, add to the SIP amount. However, one fund will suffice. SIPs of ₹250 in two funds are unnecessary - the amount is too low for any meaningful diversification. Stick to one aggressive hybrid fund. You will need to hold this fund for at least 3-4 years. If you are able to raise savings down the line, add a Nifty 50 equity index fund. Note, all these funds do require you to take risk. However, this investment is very unlikely to be able to meet any of the expenses you have mentioned. At best, you may be able to meet the 2-wheeler expenses. It is best to skip mutual funds and invest the full amount in a fixed deposit as it offers more certainty in returns and is low risk. The tax impact, given your income, will be negligible and current interest rates are high.

---

**Q** I work in a MNC. I have investments in products such as LIC and PPF. Please guide me on investments which are safe and will yield a good corpus with high returns?
MANICKA BABU

**A** If you intend to invest in equity funds, be prepared to take at least some risk. For inflation-beating returns in the long term, investing in equities is the best option. Since you have PPF, you have started building a safe foundation for investments - continue with this, and add equity-oriented mutual funds to improve overall long-term returns. You can include FDs as well as they are very low on risk, if you are willing to bear the tax impact.
With equity, first understand the basics of how stock markets work and what the risks are. There are plenty of sources available online. Broadly, markets are volatile in the short to medium term but beyond 5-7 years, risk of losses and volatility is low. You need this holding period for equity and should be willing to hold through stock market corrections. Then understand the different types of mutual funds. Go for simple funds and avoid those with complex portfolio constructs. You can start with plain hybrid aggressive or equity index funds such as the Nifty 50 index. Add other funds slowly once you develop a better understanding of how markets and funds work.
*(The writer is co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)*

**Send queries** on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

# Is the supremacy of the U.S. dollar under threat?

A real contender for the spot of the world reserve currency would have to be from an open society comprising democratic values

AGE OF THE DOLLAR

**Anand Srinivasan**
**Sashwath Swaminathan**

The topic of dedollarisation enters the fora of discourse every few years, but this time the arguments appear to be the most compelling.

Dedollarisation refers to the deposing of the U.S. dollar from the reserve currency status it enjoys globally. Some of the factors supposedly indicating a shift towards dedollarisation are: the U.S. dollar has depreciated against most major currencies and has declined by more than 10% in the past six months against the euro (due to growth expectations favouring the EU). Also, the price of gold has rallied in the past six months even though the Federal Reserve raised interest rates relentlessly.

Russia and China buying large amounts of gold has been cited as the reason for the rally (a move seen to be a retaliation against the U.S. dollar). Those forecasting a global trend towards dedollarisation also cite the sanctions the U.S. and its allies have levied against Russia due to the latter's invasion of Ukraine. The reasoning being countries would prefer to distance themselves from a currency weaponised by the government to serve a geopolitical agenda.

These trends, along with others, have been observed to be leading indicators of the presumptive dethronement of the U.S. dollar as the world's reserve currency. However, a close examination of all these trends tells a different story.

Firstly, the dollar losing ground against the euro and other currencies was preceded by a significant rally in the dollar during recent interest rate increases. The Federal Reserve admitted to considering a pause after the collapse of the Silicon Valley Bank, which raised concerns about a banking collapse. The depreciation in the dollar can be linked to the temporary financial instability and the slowing down of interest rate hikes.

**China lending uptick**

Secondly, the argument of the dollar being dumped in favour of the Chinese yuan is cited due to an uptick in Chinese lending and China's dominant export sector. Countries borrowing from China are, to some capacity, beholden to them. For instance, Sri Lanka is a country stuck in a debt trap due to excessive lending from China.

Sri Lanka is forced to take on further liabilities to tide over current dues. China controls about 20% of Sri Lanka's public debt and, therefore, exercises immense influence on debt restructuring plans. Furthermore, China does not allow the yuan to float freely against other currencies. It is said to engage in exchange-rate manipulation by routinely devaluing its currency.

Additionally, China has controlled capital flows and does not allow its citizens and firms to leave the country freely. Chinese authorities went as far as to ban Bitcoin because citizens dumped the yuan in favour of the cryptocurrency. China's export dominance stems from its significant labour capital resulting from a boom in population growth in the late 20th century.

However, recent demographic data suggests China's population growth is out of steam and declining (with the fertility rate below the replacement rate). Thus, China does not currently pose a strong challenge to the U.S. dollar's dominance.

**Investor confidence**

The United States enjoys unparalleled investor confidence because it is seen as a proponent of open society and democracy.

The open markets, which the U.S. offers, is an attractive haven for investors across the world who prefer liquidity, minimal capital control and minimal political influence on markets. Moreover, the sanctions levied by the U.S. against Russia are not unprecedented. The U.S. has a history of suspending trade and imposing sanctions on countries including China on multiple accounts. Therefore, it is a stretch to assume that the current sanctions against Russia would cause the U.S. dollar to be ousted as a haven for investors.

A real contender for the spot of the world reserve currency would have to be an open society comprising democratic values.

An autocratic government with strict capital controls, opaque foreign exchange policies and restrictions on conducting business cannot overthrow the U.S. dollar. Regardless of geopolitical tensions investors tend to always prefer large, open, and liquid markets. The recent depreciation in the U.S. dollar provides investors with an excellent opportunity to pick up an unduly battered asset, also called out-of-favour investments.

> The recent depreciation in the U.S. dollar provides investors with an excellent opportunity to pick up an unduly battered asset

Investing in undervalued U.S. stocks which happen to be at discounted prices, primarily due to the depreciation in the dollar, provides Indian investors with a great advantage. They stand to gain both future windfall gains from the expected appreciation of the dollar against the rupee, as well as gains from purchasing stocks at discounted prices.

*(Anand Srinivasan is a consultant and Sashwath Swaminathan is a research assistant at Aionion Investment Services)*

# *Share the umbrella or not?*

## COVERNOTE

Along with deciding on the option of instalment premium, individuals must also examine the pros and cons of taking a floater plan as many factors come into play while making a choice

**K. Nitya Kalyani**

In the previous instalment of Cover Note we saw the new option of instalment premiums (monthly, quarterly or half- yearly) for hospitalisation policies.

Pros were that it would suit gig workers and those who cannot block off an annual lumpsum for premium. However, it should not be mistaken as a short-period policy. If you are late with your instalment, the cover and you will start from square one including waiting periods and so on. Maybe it can be used cleverly by those leaving for an extended stint abroad but needing coverage for a few months. They can pay an instalment to cover their India time alone.

Another option people want to weigh, and this is not about a new feature, is whether to choose a floater policy or individual cover.

The answer, like for most insurance decisions, is, it depends.

A floater sum insured of ₹5 lakh means all members of the family together have a coverage of ₹5 lakh. If one of them is hospitalised and the claim is ₹3 lakh, then the rest have only ₹2 lakh for the remaining policy period among them.

Individual sum insured of ₹5 lakh per member, which gives each that quantum of full coverage for the policy year, will typically cost 5-10% more for everyone put together, than the floater premium. If the individual policy is taken as a family policy rather than several independent policies, there is the benefit of a family discount that can be 5-10% depending on the company.

**Affordability of premium**

Affordability of the premium is a key concern in exercising this option. Please also discuss with your insurance company/ agent how you may wish to move forward for converting the floater cover into individual covers in future years, or for increasing the sum insured. When you increase the sum insured, which can be done at the time of renewal, your waiting period for pre-existing conditions will start from scratch as far as the enhanced part of the sum insured is concerned.

When opting for a floater cover you may want to group significantly older members under a separate cover to isolate their higher premium rates. Similarly, each income tax assessee, if they are opting for the old IT regime, should be covered under a separate policy (with or without other non-assessee family members) so that they can each avail of the income tax break.

*(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)*

## Personal Loans

| Rates and Charges | | Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years | Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years | (% of loan amount) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Name of Lender** | **Interest Rate (%)** | **EMI (Rs)** | **EMI (Rs)** | **Processing fee** |
| HDFC Bank | 10.50 onwards | 10,747 onwards | 2,149 onwards | Up to Rs 4,999 |
| Citi Bank | 10.75 onwards | 10,809 onwards | 2,162 onwards | Up to 3% |
| Tata Capital | 10.99 onwards | 10,869 onwards | 2,174 onwards | Up to 3% |
| ICICI Bank | 10.75 onwards | 10,809 onwards | 2,162 onwards | Up to 2.50% |
| Bank of Baroda | 10.90-18.25 | 10,846-12,765 | 2,169-2,553 | Up to 2% (Min Rs 1,000 and Max Rs 10,000) |
| State Bank of India | 11.00-15.00 | 10,871-11,895 | 2,174-2,379 | Up to 1.50% (Rs 1,000-Rs 15,000) |
| Axis Bank | 10.49 onwards | 10,744 onwards | 2,149 onwards | Up to 2% |
| Kotak Mahindra Bank | 10.99 onwards | 10,869 onwards | 2,174 onwards | Up to 3% |
| Bank of India | 10.35-14.85 | 10,710-11,856 | 2,142-2,371 | Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 5,000) |
| Canara Bank | 11.75-16.25 | 11,059-12,226 | 2,212-2,445 | Up to 1% |
| Punjab National Bank | 10.40-16.95 | 10,772-12,413 | 2,144-2,483 | Up to 1% |
| HSBC Bank | 9.99-16.00 | 10,621-12,159 | 2,124-2,432 | Up to 2% |
| Federal Bank | 11.49-14.49 | 10,994-11,762 | 2,199-2,352 | Up to 3% |
| Union Bank of India | 11.40-15.50 | 10,971-12,027 | 2,194-2,405 | Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500) |
| Bajaj Finserv | 11.00 onwards | 10,871 onwards | 2,174 onwards | Upto 3.93% |
| Punjab & Sind Bank | 11.15-12.75 | 10,909-11,313 | 2,182-2,263 | Up to 1% |
| South Indian Bank | 12.85-20.60 | 11,338-13,414 | 2,268-2,683 | Up to 2% |
| UCO Bank | 12.45-12.85 | 11,236-11,338 | 2,247-2,268 | Up to 1% |
| IDFC First Bank | 10.49 onwards | 10,809 onwards | 2,162 onwards | Up to 3.50% |
| Bank of Maharashtra | 10.00-12.80 | 10,624-11,325 | 2,125-2,265 | Up to 1% |
| Karnataka Bank | 14.12 | 11,665 | 2,333 | Up to 2% of loan amount (Min. Rs 2,500 & Max. Rs 8,500) |
| IndusInd Bank | 10.49 onwards | 10,744 onwards | 2,149 onwards | Up to 3% |

## Car Loans

| Rates and Charges | | Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years | (% of loan amount) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Name of Lender** | **Interest Rate (%)** | **EMI (Rs)** | **Processing fee** |
| Union Bank of India | 9.30 - 10.50 | 10,452 - 10,747 | Rs 1,000 |
| Punjab National Bank | 8.60 - 9.75 | 10,282 - 10,562 | 0.25% (Rs. 1000 - Rs. 1500) |
| Bank of Baroda | 9.40 - 12.70 | 10,477 - 11,300 | 0.50% (Rs 2,500 - Rs 10,000) |
| Canara Bank | 9.15 - 11.95 | 10,416 - 11,110 | 0.25% (Rs 1,000 -Rs 5,000), 50% waiver on processing fee |
| Bank of India | 9.25 - 10.75 | 10,440 - 10,809 | 0.25% (Rs. 1000 - Rs. 1500) |
| UCO Bank | 8.70 - 10.55 | 10,307 - 10,759 | 1% (Up to Rs 1,500) |
| State Bank of India | 8.60 - 9.65 | 10,282 - 10,538 | Up to 0.25% |
| IDBI Bank | 8.75 - 9.90 | 10,319 - 10,599 | Rs 2,500 |
| Bank of Maharashtra* | 8.90 - 13.00 | 10,355 - 11,377 | 0.25% (Rs 1,000 - Rs 15,000) |
| Indian Overseas Bank** | 8.85 onwards | 10,343 onwards | 0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000) |
| ICICI Bank | 8.85 onwards | 10,343 onwards | Rs 999 - Rs 8,500 |
| HDFC Bank | 8.85 onwards | 10,343 onwards | 0.50% (Rs 3,500 - Rs 8,000) |
| Karnataka Bank | 9.26 - 11.68 | 10,442 - 11,042 | 0.60% (Rs 3,000 - Rs 11,000) |
| Federal Bank | 11.00 | 10,871 | Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500 |
| Indian Bank | 8.60 - 9.70 | 10,282 - 10,550 | 0.50% (Max. Rs 10,000) |
| South Indian Bank | 11.65 - 13.10 | 11,034 - 11,402 | 1% (Max: Rs 10,000) |
| City Union Bank | 14.25 - 14.75 | 11,699 - 11,829 | 1.25% (Min: Rs 1,000) |

**0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders*
***0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 750 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.20% to borrowers for financing Electric 4 Wheelers. 0.20% concession to existing Housing Loan Borrowers*
Rates and charges as on April 20
Source: Paisabazaar.com

A STAR IS BORN

## An unbeaten century in his maiden First Class outing

Sachin, aged 15 years and 232 days, scored an unbeaten century in his maiden First Class outing for Bombay against Gujarat in the Ranji Trophy at the Wankhede Stadium in the 1988-89 season. His 129-ball knock made him the youngest to reach triple figures on Ranji debut.

SCALING A NEW PEAK

## First man to slam a double hundred in one-dayers

Tendulkar became the first male cricketer in history to score a double hundred in an ODI. His unbeaten 200 against South Africa in Gwalior featured 25 fours and three sixes. It was a knock of a lifetime for the 30,000 fans present at the Captain Roop Singh Stadium.

ORANGE CAP

## IPL's Most Valuable Player in the 2010 edition

K.R. DEEPAK

In his third season of the IPL, Tendulkar was adjudged the Most Valuable Player. He scored 618 runs for Mumbai Indians in 2010 and topped the run-scoring charts, guiding Mumbai Indians to the final. The team, however, lost to Chennai Super Kings in the summit clash.

MILES AHEAD

## Sachin technically the best batter, says Ponting

Ricky Ponting has rated Sachin Tendulkar as technically the best batter he has ever played against, adding the Indian always found a way to combat anything the bowlers threw at him. " Sachin is technically the best batter that I've ever seen, and played with or against."

LONGEVITY

## Tendulkar's advice helped me reinvent my game: Mithali

Mithali spoke about her first interaction with Tendulkar and on how a chat with him before the 2017 Women's World Cup helped reinvent her game. "I wanted to ask him how he was able to have a long career and how he had to reinvent himself to face Bowlers of younger generation."

# I don't think I am 50, says Tendulkar

The batting legend, who smashed a century of 100s in international cricket, is content with his achievements on the field but aspires for more off it

SACHIN'S 50

**Amol Karhadkar**
MUMBAI

As Sachin Tendulkar turns 50, he looks back at his first innings and spells out the targets for his second.

**What's the feeling like now that you are turning 50?**
(Laughs) It hasn't hit me yet, honestly. I don't think I am 50. I still like to fool around with my friends and play pranks. And I want it that way because that is something that keeps you young.

**How is that the bubbly kid who grew up in Sahitya Sahawas hasn't let the Bharat Ratna or the global celebrity status weigh on him?**
The accolades are a reflection of what I have done on the field. But that doesn't give me the right to do whatever I want because at the end of the day, I have to come back home and face everyone (in the family). It's a reflection of the way the family brought me up. In the second part of my life, Anjali and her family played a big role. We never really had a big celebration for any of my achievements. We just told ourselves this is a good moment, offer a box of sweets and move on.

**The chroniclers have compared your rise with India's changing face globally...**
The timing was such that many changes happened in our country and things started to look different. The biggest change I noticed on the field was the 1996 World Cup. There were sponsorships and multiple things. I was possibly the first (Indian) cricketer to have signed a contract where an agent was managing an athlete. There were comments saying that my focus was on money. In fact, it was the other way round. The bank balance was never more important than the score account.

**How did you never let the middle-class complex affect you as it was the Indian psyche in the 80s and 90s?**
I think it was due to the calmness of my father and the grit of my mother. I have always believed that someone being nice shouldn't be taken as weakness. If I am nice, polite and humble, it doesn't mean that I am not confident. Where I needed to show aggression, I showed it. There is a difference between reaction and response. Reaction came instinctively on the field but response was completely different.

**Almost a decade since you last played for India, what is it that you miss the most?**
When you are playing for your country, that pride, those on-field challenges, those meetings, that camaraderie in the dressing room, those moments... it's but natural that they cannot be permanent. I used to think how the experience of my last match would be. Whatever happened that day, it was more than special to me.

**You were a trend-setter on the field in many ways – technique, running between the wickets, playing lofted strokes consistently... what do you make of modern batting techniques?**
What's changed batting is the laws of the game. If we shorten the game to 40 overs and bring one more fielder in, we'll get to see maybe 380 runs. Whereas you take one fielder out, use one ball – let it get discoloured – you may not see 300-plus so frequently. It is all about the rules that the ICC introduces and also the kind of surfaces we play on.

**Would you focus on the skills front or have cricket getting driven by the commercial aspect?**
That balance has to be there. Of course, commercially it has to make sense but at the same time, if we have shorter formats and introduce them to the younger generation, even Test cricket needs to go at a reasonable pace. It cannot be a dead track and a drawn Test.

**You are fine with a two-and-a-half day Test rather than a five-day dull draw...**
We should not judge a Test by the number of days played but by the quality of cricket. If the quality is good and a Test goes on for four and a half days, I am fine with it. Why is it that if it's a challenging wicket, no one can bat? It is called Test cricket... that's where your skill and character are tested. There will be difficult surfaces and that is where you are meant to show your mettle.

**What would you attribute the Indian batters' inability to score big at home in Tests? Pitches, lack of skills, evolving batting techniques due to an overdose of limited-overs cricket, or a combination of all these factors?**
I think that has happened over a period of time. The opponents, too, have virtually got their home team playing IPL for two months in India. So these are not foreign conditions for anyone. Similarly, for our players, they are not unfamiliar opponents. Earlier, if I was playing against someone – it could be a Glenn McGrath or whoever – we only saw him every four years in Australia or every four years in India.

**Had T20 cricket happened earlier, would we have seen a different Tendulkar in the latter half of his career?**
I don't know, honestly... tough to answer. I personally don't think so. In fact, I would say T20 is the easiest format. In ODIs, you have to last the whole day and is the most difficult physically. Test cricket, when the fast bowlers have to bowl long spells in the heat, it can be very taxing. Or, if a batter has to bat the whole day under the scorching sun, things can get tough.

**Is there a period or instance during your career – or life – that you wished things had panned out differently?**
Yes. 2007 World Cup. That phase from 2005 to 2007 wasn't a great one in Indian cricket. Also the late 90s... that was a dark phase in Indian cricket. Those two for sure.

**You have always been involved in social service...**
We started the Foundation (Sachin Tendulkar Foundation) basically to work with children. We work in three verticals: health, education and sports. We have done a decent job and has given us satisfaction. Outside the Foundation too, we do some work but the Foundation is where the energy goes into in the second innings.

**Even before the Foundation shaped up, you always interacted with youngsters. How do you assess Gen Z?**
Their exposure is just unbelievable. I was actually in Tadoba (National Park) and just outside in a village, I had a look at a school on the way. There were 17 girls and 17 boys. They had my chapter in the book. The teacher told the students that I was the person in the book! When I asked them what they wanted to be, the answers were unbelievable. They wanted to be musicians, professional dancers, police officers, doctors and scientists... the children were between 8 and 12, but their confidence was unbelievable.

**At 50, is there anything that you wanted to achieve and have not been able to do yet?**
Not really. The first innings lasted 24 years. I am just completing 10 in the second and want to achieve more in it. That's where I would be wearing the Foundation hat and represent India. That's my goal now.

**If there's a change you want to see in Indian cricket over the next decade, what will that be?**
The big change I wanted to happen has already begun. With the Women's Premier League, equal opportunity has started. It's going to open the doors to so many young girls. Equality has multiple layers: opportunity and the freedom to express yourself in various platforms.

**Resplendent star:** Sachin Tendulkar, a trend-setter during his playing days, wants to leave an imprint in the post-retirement phase too. ANI & FILE PHOTOS

### Tendulkar in numbers

| Batting | M | Inns | Runs | HS | Avg. | 100s/50s |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tests | 200 | 329 | 15,921 | 248* | 53.78 | 51/68 |
| ODIs | 463 | 452 | 18,426 | 200* | 44.83 | 49/96 |
| T20Is | 1 | 1 | 10 | 10 | 10.00 | 0/0 |
| **Bowling** | **M** | **Inns** | **Wkts** | **BBI** | **Econ** | **4W/5W** |
| Tests | 200 | 145 | 46 | 3/10 | 3.52 | 0/0 |
| ODIs | 463 | 270 | 154 | 5/32 | 5.10 | 4/2 |
| T20Is | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1/12 | 4.80 | 0/0 |

# Conway, Rahane and Dube pilot CSK to the top

IPL-16

**Y.B. Sarangi**
KOLKATA

Devon Conway, Ajinkya Rahane and Shivam Dube's power-packed half-centuries catapulted Chennai Super Kings to a comprehensive 49-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League at the Eden Gardens here on Sunday.

Asked to bat, CSK posted the season's highest total of 235 for four and restricted KKR to 186 for eight for its third successive win and fifth overall. It was the fourth straight loss for Nitish Rana's men.

Conway, who began from where he had left off in Chennai and scored his fourth consecutive half-century, felt at 'home' at the Eden which had a considerable presence of yellow and reverberated to chants 'CSK, CSK' and 'Dhoni, Dhoni'.

Displaying superb placement and range of shots, Conway (56, 40b, 4x4, 3x6), let off on zero by David Wiese off his own bowling, was fluent on both sides while forming a 73-run opening partnership with Ruturaj Gaikwad, who scored a fine 35 (20b, 2x4, 3x6).

Suyash Sharma, who mixed it up and kept it tight, foxed Ruturaj to break the stand and Varun claimed Conway, who drove to long-off.

Rahane (71 n.o., 29b, 6x4, 5x6) and the big-hitting Shivam Dube (50, 21b, 2x4, 5x6) carried on and added 85 to pile more misery on KKR.

Rahane, who pulled impressively and played some cheeky scoops, and Dube, who hit spectacular sixes including three straight ones, reached their half-centuries in the 18th over. It was pleasing to see Rahane, who hammered two sixes and a four successively off Umesh Yadav and two sixes and a four consecutively off Varun, go after the Knight Riders attack.

In reply, KKR failed to get off to a good start and lost four wickets for 70.

Jason Roy, who was hurt while fielding, came in at No. 5. The Englishman's breezy innings (61, 26b, 5x4, 5x6) and his 65-run stand with Rinku Singh (53 n.o., 33b, 3x4, 4x6) wasn't enough while chasing the stiff target.

**In top gear:** Rahane dealt mostly in boundaries. K.R. DEEPAK

SCOREBOARD

**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS**
Ruturaj Gaikwad b Suyash 35 *(20b, 2x4, 3x6)*, Devon Conway c Wiese b Varun 56 *(40b, 4x4, 3x6)*, Ajinkya Rahane (not out) 71 *(29b, 6x4, 5x6)*, Shivam Dube c Roy b Khejroliya 50 *(21b, 2x4, 5x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja c Rinku b Khejroliya 18 *(8b, 2x6)*, M.S. Dhoni (not out) 2 *(3b)*; Extras (w-2, nb-1): 3; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 235.

**FALL OF WICKETS**
1-73 (Ruturaj, 7.3 overs), 2-109 (Conway, 12.1), 3-194 (Dube, 17.3), 4-232 (Jadeja, 19.4).

**KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING**
Umesh 3-0-35-0, Wiese 3-0-38-0, Varun 4-0-49-1, Khejroliya 3-0-44-2, Narine 2-0-23-0, Suyash 4-0-29-1, Russell 1-0-17-0.

**KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS**
N. Jagadeesan c Jadeja b Deshpande 1 *(3b)*, Sunil Narine b Akash 0 *(3b)*, Venkatesh Iyer **(Impact Player in place of Suyash)** lbw b Moeen 20 *(20b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Nitish Rana c Ruturaj b Jadeja 27 *(20b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Jason Roy b Theekshana 61 *(26b, 5x4, 5x6)*, Rinku Singh (not out) 53 *(33b, 3x4, 4x6)*, Andre Russell c Dube b Pathirana 9 *(6b, 1x6)*, David Wiese lbw b Deshpande 1 *(2b)*, Umesh Yadav c Conway b Theekshana 4 *(4b)*, Varun Chakravarthy (not out) 0 *(3b)*; Extras (lb-1, w-9): 10; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 186.

**FALL OF WICKETS**
1-1 (Narine, 0.4), 2-1 (Jagadeesan, 1.2), 3-46 (Venkatesh, 7.1), 4-70 (Nitish, 8.2), 5-135 (Roy, 14.3), 6-162 (Russell, 16.4), 7-171 (Wiese, 17.3), 8-180 (Umesh, 18.3).

**SUPER KINGS BOWLING**
Akash **(Impact Player in place of Rayudu)** 4-0-29-1, Deshpande 4-0-43-2, Theekshana 4-0-32-2, Moeen 1-0-20-1, Jadeja 3-0-34-1, Pathirana 4-0-27-1.

**Toss:** KKR; **PoM:** Rahane.

*Super Kings won by 49 runs.*

### Next assignment

**KKR:** April 26 vs. **RCB**
Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

**CSK:** April 27 vs. **RR**
Jaipur, 7.30 p.m.

### Points Table

| | M | W | L | PTS | NRR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chennai Super Kings | 7 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 0.662 |
| Rajasthan Royals | 7 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 0.844 |
| Lucknow Super Giants | 7 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 0.547 |
| Gujarat Titans | 6 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 0.212 |
| Royal Challengers Bangalore | 7 | 4 | 3 | 8 | -0.008 |
| Punjab Kings | 7 | 4 | 3 | 8 | -0.162 |
| Mumbai Indians | 6 | 3 | 3 | 6 | -0.254 |
| Kolkata Knight Riders | 7 | 2 | 5 | 4 | -0.186 |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad | 6 | 2 | 4 | 4 | -0.794 |
| Delhi Capitals | 6 | 1 | 5 | 2 | -1.183 |

*After the KKR-CSK match on April 23*

## INBRIEF

### Suryakumar crosses the 6,000-run mark in T20s

Mumbai Indians batter Suryakumar Yadav reached the 6,000-run mark in T20 cricket on Saturday. The 32-year-old accomplished the milestone during his side's IPL match against Punjab Kings in Mumbai. Suryakumar now has 6,021 runs in 248 matches and 226 innings at 34.01 and a strike rate of 149.55. He has three centuries and 38 half-centuries with a best of 117.

### Alcaraz claims back-to-back Barcelona titles

Carlos Alcaraz staked his claim as a French Open favourite when he brushed aside Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-4 on Sunday to win back-to-back Barcelona titles. The 19-year-old World No. 2 bagged his third trophy of 2023, after winning in Buenos Aires and Indian Wells, and the ninth of his career. Meanwhile on Saturday, Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden were beaten 6-4, 7-5 by top seeds Wesley Koolhof and Neal Skupski in the doubles semifinals. The Indo-Aussie pair had beaten the Dutch-British opponents in the final of Indian Wells earlier this season. The semifinal entry fetched 180 ATP points and $45,120 for Bopanna and Ebden.

### Kiptum and Hasan run to glory in London marathon

Kenya's Kelvin Kiptum ran second-fastest marathon of all time, and set a London Marathon course record, on Sunday, finishing in two hours, one minute, 25 seconds, nearly three minutes ahead of team-mate Geoffrey Kamworor (2:04:23) and Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola (2:04:59). Dutch middle-distance athlete Sifan Hassan scored a stunning upset to win her debut marathon in 2:18:34, ahead of second-placed Alemu Megertu of Ethiopia (2:18:37) and Kenya's Olympic champion Peres Jepchirchir (2:18:38). "I am so happy with the result. "I don't know what to say right now, I am just grateful," Kiptum told the BBC. "I learned to be patient and just to run your own race," Hassan told a news conference.

### Nepomniachtchi maintains one-point lead

Ian Nepomniachtchi maintained his one-point lead after drawing with Ding Liren in the 10th round of the World chess championship match at Astana on Sunday. Just the two kings remained on the board after 45 moves. Nepomniachtchi is leading 5.5-4.5, with four rounds remaining. The player who reaches 7.5 points will be crowned the new World champion.

### Shuttler Raksha Kandasamy triumphs in Cyprus

Raksha Kandasamy beat UAE's Mysha Omer Khan 25-23, 21-18 to claim the under-19 girls singles title in the Cyprus Junior 2023 in Nicosia on Sunday. The Indian teen won all her five matches in straight games.

### Rajasthan women put it across Puducherry

Rajasthan defeated Puducherry 25-13, 25-19, 25-14 in the women's section of the 36th Federation Cup volleyball championships at Karaikal on Sunday.

**Other results: Men: Group B:** Puducherry bt Punjab 31-29, 19-25, 18-25, 35-33, 15-10.
**Women:** Railways bt West Bengal 25-14, 25-14, 25-16.

**LIVE TELECAST**

**Sri Lanka vs Ireland**: 2nd Test, day 1, Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 10 a.m.
**World Chess championship**: FIDE & Chess.com YouTube channels, 2.30 p.m. onwards
**IPL**: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m.
**Pakistan vs New Zealand**: 5th T20I, , Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 9.30 p.m.
**Serie A**: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 12.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

# Disciplined bowling helps RCB prevail in Royals battle

Harshal, Hasaranga and Willey help the side drag the game in the back-half after the visitors were on course; du Plessis-Maxwell 127-run third-wicket stand set up the win

**IPL-16**

**Ashwin Achal**
BENGALURU

On a batting friendly M. Chinnaswamy Stadium pitch, Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) did well to defend a par total against Rajasthan Royals (RR) here on Sunday.

Set a target of 190, RR stumbled to 182 for six. A disciplined bowling performance from RCB saved the day, with pacer Harshal Patel starring with three wickets.

It was a poor chase from RR. Yashasvi Jaiswal (47, 37b, 5x4, 2x6) and Devdutt Padikkal (52, 34b, 7x4, 1x6) guided the visitor to a comfortable 92 for one in 10 overs, but from here, slow batting robbed RR of momentum.

Southpaw Shimron Hetmyer (3, 9b), known to be a power hitter, had a shocking outing.

The asking rate reached breaking point when RR needed 61 runs from 24 balls. Dhruv Jurel (34 n.o., 16b, 2x4, 2x6) and R. Ashwin (12, 6b, 2x4) fired in spurts, but it was nowhere near enough.

Harshal's slower deliveries befuddled the RR batters, while David Willey (one for 26) kept up the pressure with a tight line. Mohammed Siraj was expensive, even if he often beat the batter for pace.

Spinner Wanindu Hasaranga applied the brakes with a miserly spell in the middle overs.

After being put in, RCB failed to capitalise on an electric stand between Faf du Plessis and Glenn Maxwell. Maxwell (77, 44b, 6x4, 4x6) and du Plessis (62, 39b, 8x4, 2x6) crushed the RR bowling with a 127-run third-wicket stand in 67 balls, but after the duo departed, RCB moved at a snail's pace.

**The big show:** Glenn Maxwell's exploits put the visitors on the back-foot early on. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

The home team managed to score only 33 runs in the last five overs. RCB's complete dependence on du Plessis and Maxwell reads like an old and tired script. The likes of Shahbaz Ahmed, Mahipal Lomror, Dinesh Karthik and Suyash Prabhudesai have repeatedly failed to contribute.

**Next assignment**
**RCB:** April 26 vs. **KKR** Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.
**RR:** April 27 vs. **CSK** Jaipur, 7.30 p.m.

It was a forgettable day for Virat Kohli.

The opener was sent back in the very first ball of the match, caught plumb in front by an Trent Boult inswinger.

RR's Yuzvendra Chahal (one for 28) was on the money, keeping his leggies wide outside off to negate the slog-sweep.

**SCOREBOARD**

**ROYAL CHALLENGERS**
Virat Kohli lbw b Boult 0 *(1b)*, Faf du Plessis run out 62 *(39b, 8x4, 2x6)*, Shahbaz Ahmed c Jaiswal b Boult 2 *(4b)*, Glenn Maxwell c Holder b Ashwin 77 *(44b, 6x4, 4x6)*, Mahipal Lomror c Padikkal b Chahal 8 *(6b, 1x4)*, Dinesh Karthik c Buttler b Sandeep 16 *(13b, 2x4)*, Suyash Prabhudessai run out 0 *(2b)*, Wanindu Hasaranga run out 6 *(7b)*, David Willey (not out) 4 *(2b, 1x4)*, Vyshak Vijaykumar c Hetmyer b Sandeep 0 *(1b)*, Mohammed Siraj (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-3, w-10): 13; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 189.

**FALL OF WICKETS**
1-0 (Kohli, 0.1 overs), 2-12 (Shahbaz, 2.1), 3-139 (du Plessis, 13.2), 4-156 (Maxwell, 14.6), 5-163 (Lomror, 16.3), 6-163 (Prabhudessai, 16.5), 7-180 (Hasaranga, 19.1), 8-184 (Karthik, 19.2), 9-184 (Vyshak, 19.3).

**RAJASTHAN ROYALS BOWLING**
Boult 4-0-41-2, Sandeep 4-0-49-2, Ashwin 4-0-36-1, Chahal 4-0-28-1, Holder 4-0-32-0.

**RAJASTHAN ROYALS**
Yashasvi Jaiswal c Kohli b Harshal 47 *(37b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Jos Buttler b Siraj 0 *(2b)*, Devdutt Padikkal c Kohli b Willey 52 *(34b, 7x4, 1x6)*, Sanju Samson c Shahbaz b Harshal 22 *(15b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Shimron Hetmyer run out 3 *(9b)*, Dhruv Jurel (not out) 34 *(16b, 2x4, 2x6)*, R. Ashwin c Prabhudessai b Harshal 12 *(6b, 2x4)*, Abdul Basith **(Impact Player in place of Padikkal)** (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (b-1, lb-3, w-7): 11; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 182.

**FALL OF WICKETS**
1-1 (Buttler, 0.4), 2-99 (Padikkal, 11.4), 3-108 (Jaiswal, 13.4), 4-125 (Samson, 15.2), 5-155 (Hetmyer, 17.5), 6-180 (Ashwin, 19.4).

**RCB BOWLING**
Siraj 4-0-39-1, Willey 4-0-26-1, Vyshak 2-0-24-0, Maxwell 2-0-25-0, Harshal **(Impact Player in place of du Plessis)** 4-0-32-3, Hasaranga 4-0-32-0.

**Toss:** Royals; **PoM:** Maxwell.
*RCB won by seven runs.*

# A contest between two bottom-dwellers

**V.S. Aravind**
HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad will aim to get its campaign back on track when it takes on Delhi Capitals in the 34th match of the IPL at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium here on Monday.

Languishing at the bottom of the table, both teams will look to regroup and find the impetus as they need to win consistently to keep their hopes of qualifying for the Playoffs.

Delhi Capitals will hope the team fires in unison, while Sunrisers sweats on its batting mechanics to calibrate the misfiring engines.

The Aiden Markram-led side has blown hot and cold as it failed to capitalise on the winning momentum after recovering from its first two losses and winning the next two. It crashed against heavyweights Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings.

Harry Brook has showcased his batting pyrotechnics with a fine century, but the opener couldn't replicate his success in the next games. Markram, Rahul Tripathi, Heinrich Klaasen, Mayank Agarwal and Washington Sundar add depth to the batting, but Hyderabad's late surge lies predominantly on the start its top-order provides.

The bowling is spearheaded by old warhorse Bhuvneshwar Kumar with Umran Malik being his ally, along with the spin of Mayank Markande.

For Delhi Capitals, Warner has led from the front with a fine half-century, but Prithvi Shaw's form is a major concern. The likes of Mukesh Kumar, Anrich Nortje and Mitchell Marsh make Delhi a ruthless unit. However, the team needs to translate its on-paper credentials into match-winning performances.

**TODAY'S MATCH**
SUNRISERS vs. DELHI CAPITALS
**Hyderabad,** 7.30 p.m.
**HEAD-TO-HEAD**
Played: **21**
SRH **11** | DC **10**
**PREVIOUS MEETING**
DC won by 21 runs, 2022
LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA APP

**Looking for turnaround:** Sunrisers skipper Markram will hope his batters strike form. NAGARA GOPAL

# Wrestlers resume protest, demand making public the findings of the oversight panel

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

The country's top wrestlers, including Sakshi Malik and Vinesh Phogat, returned to protest site at Jantar Mantar on Sunday and demanded that the government makes public the findings of the oversight panel that investigated into sexual harassment allegations against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

The wrestlers also demanded that an FIR be lodged against the WFI chief, who has denied the allegations that first surfaced in January this year when grapplers had staged a 'sit-in' protest and demanded that federation be disbanded.

The six-member oversight panel, headed by M.C. Mary Kom, had submitted its report in the first week of April but the government has not yet made it public.

"We are tired of asking the government to release the findings.

"We have filed a complaint at a police station in Connaught Place and want an FIR to be filed against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh," said Vinesh.

**Notice issued**
Meanwhile, the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) chief Swati Maliwal issued a notice to the Delhi police asking as to why an FIR had not been registered following the complaint submitted on April 21.

In a letter to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Pranav Tayal, Ms. Maliwal said that the women's body has received a complaint from one of the women wrestlers who have sought an FIR against Mr. Singh.

Terming is a serious matter concerning the safety of female wrestlers, the DCW chief asked the DCP to submit by Tuesday 4 p.m. a copy of FIR in the matter, reasons for delay, details of accused persons arrested in the matter, details of action taken against the official who leaked the complainant's information with the officials at the Department of Sports, MYAS, among other details.

When contacted, there was no response form the Delhi Police on the matter.
*(With inputs from PTI)*

# Indian men's recurve team clinches silver; Dhiraj wins bronze

**ARCHERY**

**Sports Bureau**

Twenty-one-year-old debutant B. Dhiraj performed well to collect an individual bronze medal and was part of the Indian men's recurve team which claimed silver on the concluding day of the Archery World Cup Stage-1 in Antalya, Turkey, on Sunday.

The Indian team of Dhiraj, Atanu Das and Tarundeep Rai, lost 4-5 (54-55, 50-56, 59-58, 56-55, 28-28) to China, returning to event after four years, in the title clash via shoot-off.

India, which won a team gold way back in Shanghai in 2010, made a superb comeback from 0-4 to level the match 4-4 and forced a shoot-off.

Both teams shot 28 apiece but China won the tie-breaker because of the only X it got.

In the individual competitions, Dhiraj won the first two sets before losing 4-6 (27-26, 28-27, 28-29, 26-28, 28-30) to Olympian Dan Olaru of Moldova in the semifinals.

Dhiraj raised the bar and defeated Kazakhstan's Ilfat Abdullin 7-3 (28-28, 29-26, 28-29, 29-27, 29-27) in a closely-fought duel to take the bronze medal.

Indian archers had bagged two gold medals in compound events on Saturday.

**Fruitful day:** Dhiraj added an individual recurve bronze to the team silver on Sunday. GETTY IMAGES

**Opening the floodgates:** Murphy started the scoring spree for Newcastle with two early strikes. REUTERS

# Rampant Newcastle hits Tottenham for six

**EURO LEAGUES**

**Agence France-Presse**
LONDON

Tottenham Hotspur's's bid to qualify for the Champions League suffered a hammer blow as it conceded five times in the first 21 minutes of a humiliating 6-1 defeat at top four rival Newcastle on Sunday.

Cristian Stellini's side was buried by an avalanche of goals from Jacob Murphy and Alexander Isak, who both netted twice, and strikes from Joelinton and Callum Wilson.

The north Londoners are six points behind third-placed Newcastle and fourth placed Manchester United, having played two more games than United and one more than Newcastle.

**The results:**
**Premier League:** Bournemouth 0 lost to West Ham 4 (Antonio 5, Paqueta 12, Rice 43, Fornals 72); Newcastle 6 (Murphy 2, 9, Joelinton 6, Isak 19, 21, Wilson 67) bt Tottenham 1 (Kane 49).
**LaLiga:** Elche 0 lost to Valencia 2 (Lino 19, Verdu 42-og).
**Serie A:** Empoli 0 lost to Inter Milan 3 (Lukaku 48, 76, Martinez 88); Monza 3 (Biraghi 26-og, Dany Mota 43, Pessina 59-pen) bt Fiorentina 2 (Kouame 8, Saponara 13); Udinese 3 (Samardzic 2, Perez 27, Success 36) bt Cremonese 0.
**On Saturday: LaLiga:** Almeria 1 (Centelles 90+2) lost to Athletic Bilbao 2 (Nico Williams 9, De Marcos 56); Real Sociedad 2 (Sorloth 59, Lejeune 81-og) bt Rayo Vallecano 1 (Palazon 57); Real Valladolid 1 (Monchu 24) bt Girona 0; Real Madrid 2 (Asensio 43, Militao 48) bt Celta Vigo 0.

**Bundesliga:** Borussia Dortmund 4 (Bellingham 19, Malen 24, 66, Hummels 41) Eintracht Frankfurt 0

**Serie A:** Lazio 0 lost to Torino 1 (Ilic 43); Salernitana 3 (Pirola 9, Dia 20, Coulibaly 65) bt Sassuolo 0; Sampdoria 1 (Amione 23) drew with Spezia 1 (Verde 59).

# Batting in middle overs in no easy task: Harshal Patel

The RCB bowler says the trend we have seen here is that when the ball is hard and new, it is easier to score runs and when the ball loses shine and hardness, it gets difficult to hit shots,

IPL-16

**Ashwin Achal**
BENGALURU

Rajasthan Royals' chase came undone between the 10th and 16th overs, when the visitors could score only 37 runs. Royal Challengers Bangalore bowlers Harshal Patel, David Willey and Wanindu Hasaranga did the damage in these middle overs, contributing to the team's seven-run win here on Sunday.

Batting in the middle overs is no easy task, Harshal stated.

"The trend we have seen here is that when the ball is hard and new, it is easier to score runs. When the ball loses shine and hardness, it gets difficult to hit shots.

"So before we took the field, the conversation was that even if they have a good partnership up front, we will try to bowl back-to-back dot balls and try to be as aggressive as we can. We know how difficult it becomes in the later half of the innings," Harshal said in the post-match press conference.

**Making an impact:** Harshal bowled impressively, picking up three wickets in RCB's win over RR.
K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

Harshal was unable to bat due to an injury, and was used as an impact player. Batter Faf du Plessis, meanwhile, did not feature as a fielder.

"The way we have used Faf as a batter and myself as a bowler has been very good for the team. Both of us have been carrying injuries which does not allow us to execute one of our skills. The impact rule allows us to take care of our primary skill," Harshal said.

Harshal added that he hopes to recover fully in a week.

# Davies to miss Bayern's "upcoming games"

**Agence France-Presse**
MUNICH

Bayern Munich full-back Alphonso Davies has been ruled out of the club's "upcoming games" with a hamstring injury, the German side announced on Sunday.

Davies suffered the injury in Saturday's 3-1 loss at Mainz. Bayern released a statement saying Davies "will be out of action for the upcoming games".

The Canada defender fell to the turf after just nine minutes against Mainz, holding the back of his left hamstring, and was substituted.

The 22-year-old has played 38 times for Bayern this season.

# We made it very difficult for ourselves, says Naveen-ul-Haq

**S. Dipak Ragav**
CHENNAI

Lucknow Super Giants pacer Naveen-ul-Haq felt his team made things worse for themselves with their conservative play after going down by seven runs against Gujarat Titans on Saturday.

"We made it very difficult for ourselves in the last four overs. They put us under pressure, and we lost some wickets. It's a T20 game, and you can't predict anything; the last four overs can go any team's way," said Naveen after the match.

"It was our game for almost 36 overs of the match.

"They bowled well in the last four overs and couldn't finish the job. They got some good spinners like Noor Ahmad, Rashid Khan and Jayant Yadav and kept the pressure," added the Afghan pacer.

**Delivering when needed:** Titans skipper Hardik came up with a matured innings. ANI

Meanwhile, Titans off-spinner Jayant Yadav the win will give the team a huge confidence boost, considering they were out of the game till the last few overs.

"When you win close matches like this, it augurs well for the bowling unit and the team.

"It gives a sense of belief that we can win from any situation," said Jayant.

# Lahiri finishes second; Gooch triumphs

**Press Trust of India**
ADELAIDE

A week after finishing second in Vietnam, Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri made a big dash in the third and final round of the Liv Series event here on Sunday by finishing a creditable second again.

Lahiri, nine-under after two rounds of three-under and six-under, closed with seven-under to total 16-under.

Talor Gooch, 31, who shot 62 and 62 on the first two days, carded one-over 73 but managed to win at 19-under by three shots.

# Lajovic halts Rublev to win Banja Luka title

TENNIS

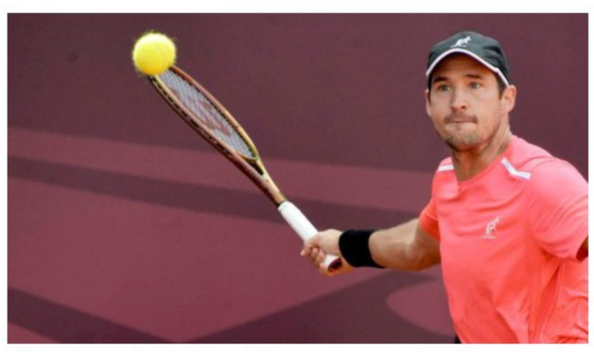
**Agence France-Presse**
BANJA LUKA

Dusan Lajovic upset the in-form Andrey Rublev in the Banja Luka final on Sunday, winning 6-3, 4-6, 6-4 to clinch his second career ATP title.

World No. 70 Lajovic, who knocked out Novak Djokovic in the quarterfinals, snapped Rublev's eight-match winning run that began with his triumph last week in Monte Carlo.

Lajovic led 5-1 in the deciding set but had to hold off a spirited comeback from Rublev before securing victory after two hours and 32 minutes.

"Honestly it was probably the toughest match I have had in the past six months. I felt drained," the 32-year-old Lajovic said. "From 5-1 in the third I could not feel my legs and felt a bit dizzy. "I knew he was going to fight but somehow I managed to pull it out in the last game."



**Champion:** Lajovic claimed his second career ATP title on Sunday.
AP

## BENGALURU ROUND-UP

### Neeraj and Abhiram bowl RVCE to victory

Neeraj (5/10) and Abhiram (4/23) wreaked havoc as RVCE beat Acharya IT by 57 runs in the M.S. Ramaiah All India inter-engineering colleges cricket tournament here on Sunday.

**The scores:**

RVCE 177/7 in 30 overs (Lochan Appanna 68, Adarsh 35, Darshan 3/28) bt Acharya IT 120 in 23.5 overs (Ronith 37, Ashan 29, Vignesh 27, Neeraj 5/10, Abhiram 4/23).

BMSCE 230/7 in 30 overs (Thejas 52, Himanshu 39, Daivik 26, Janardhan 4/32) bt SJCIT 171 in 28.5 overs (Bharath 49, Sai 28, Jagan 27, Aarush 4/12, Partha 3/48).

### Royan nets two in Rising Star's win

Royan Rodrigues scored a brace as Rising Star HC defeated Decathlon Hockey 4-2 in the Travancore Cup hockey tournament here on Sunday.

**The results:**

Rising Star HC 4 (Vaishnav Kumar 3, Royan Rodrigues 20, 22, Jagadish 48) bt Decathlon Hockey 2 (Pavan 5, Varun 30).

Naveen HC 2 (Shylesh 17, Sharath 26) bt Ideal Sports Academy-A 0.

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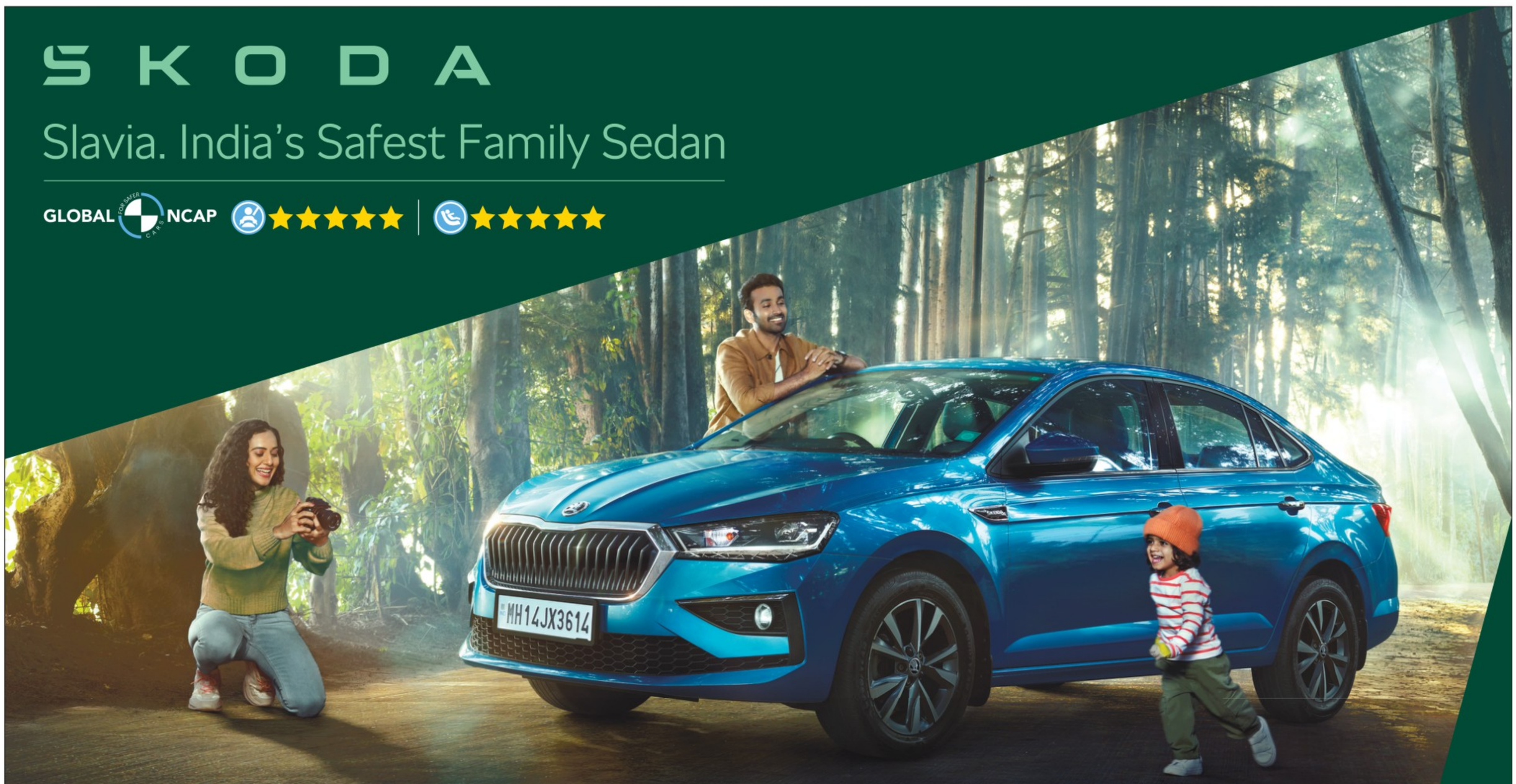


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THE HINDU GROUP

# AND IT IS A FIFTY FOR THE MAN OF HUNDREDS

On Sachin's 50th birthday, we asked his die-hard fans to pen heartfelt notes for their beloved icon. Here are a few selected ones. **#50forSachin**

"To the deity whose drives are straight as Arjuna's arrow, upper-cuts sharper than Takemikazuchi's sword, punches as solid as Zeus's thunderbolt and still calm as Equanimous Buddha....happy birthday!"
**Yuvraj Yadav**

"The world stood in wonder when the teenager with a pencil moustache blasted centuries with his willow in the international cricketing arena nearly three and a half decades back, a time when India was in the cusp of sporting resurgence.
Then started the saga of a brilliant cricketing legend, who, by total dedication and sheer dint of hard work, reached hitherto unheard of highs of batting glory and setting records, which no aspiring scions of this field can dream to obliterate."
**John Kuruvilla**

"Sachin Tendulkar is the jewel in India's crown. He inspired even the diamond merchants who gathered from far-flung places such as Antwerp, London, Mumbai and other cities to watch international fixtures hosted by Nicky Oppenheimer, the Chairman of De Beers and various other companies across the world dealing in diamonds. All of them may have been weighing his carat, cut and clarity before they come to the conclusion that here in India there is yet another rare gem."
**Ramalingam V**

"Your induction into the Indian national cricket team at the age of sixteen years showcases your capability and prowess. It was your absolute dedication towards cricket along with willpower, grit that enabled you to play cricket for more than two decades, break and create many batting records in your illustrious career. You were a perfect team member.
You stepped down as the captain, without any egos, you even agreed to play under junior captains and contributed immensely.
Thus proving that team's achievements are way more important than your personal goals. Sachin Tendulkar is a source of inspiration not only for budding cricketers but also for ambassador of India in the sporting arena."
**Mili Sudheesh**

"With your retirement, the baton of awe inspiring and revolutionary batting had been passed since to new kids on the block who across the globe are busily hitting six sixes an over and hitting a lofted six off of a straight drive. But none of this would have been possible if you, Sachin sir, had not invented modern batting in the first place.
Your genius illuminated the world of cricket like an enormous comet; well, it's still blazing away today."
**Yash Pratap**

"Sachin was more than just a cricketer to us 90s kids. He was a symbol of hope, source of inspiration and a legend in every sense of the word. Today, as we celebrate his 50th birthday, we can't help but feel nostalgic for those simpler times when Sachin ruled our hearts and the cricket field. Sachin, you will always be our hero, our idol, and our Little Master."
**Love Durai**

"Those straight drives did not just go past the umpire for a boundary, but straight into our hearts. We celebrated your centuries, bit our nails during your 90's, felt dejected during tough times. But you always come back stronger from injuries or lack of form, the epic 241 at Sydney, is a true testament to that."
**Arya Nair**

"I was in school and hated chemistry and lost a tug of war game and took my bleeding hands home and you batted for me.
I sprouted a moustache and spent vacations in Pune with my long-departed grandpa and loved every match you played and you batted for me.
I fell in love and out of love and graduated and looked ahead at my brand new dreams and you batted for me.
I lost my dog and I cried and cried and I gave up non-veg and you batted for me.
I was in office and we friends bonded over you and we screamed ourselves hoarse on the streets and fluttered the flag as you ripped through Shoaib and you batted for me.
I got better pay and bought my first car and a new LCD to go and on it too, you batted for me.
I saw people lose jobs and not lose their hopes and the world was now a far tougher place and you batted for me.
I came back home from some really tiring work and a child in my building called me uncle and I put on the TV and you were there and you batted like I was still in school and like the world had not moved and you batted for me."
**Harshad Rajadhyaksha**

The above responses from our readers have been edited to capture the warmest points of their messages for Sachin. We will be publishing the top responses from our readers in the May issue of Sportstar. Grab your copy to read them.

SPORTSTAR


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